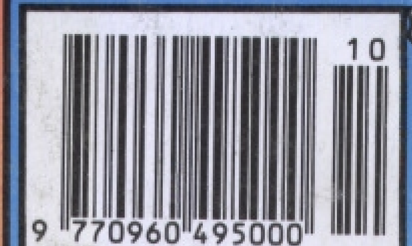
THE AMAZING NEW CONSOLES MAG!!!

MEAN MACHINES

£1.75
NO 1 OCT





SEGA



MEGADRIVE



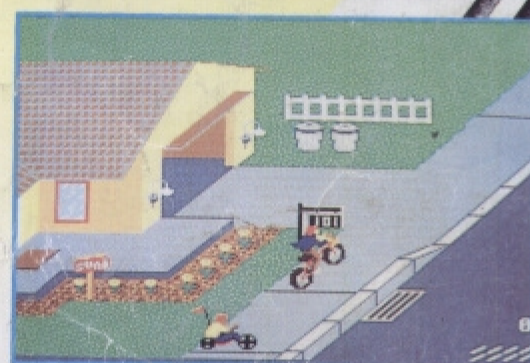
GX4000



NINTENDO



PAPERBOY!



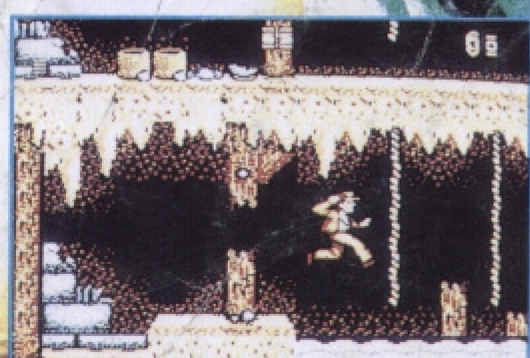
HE'S MAD!

MOONWALKER!



HE'S BAD!

INDY III!

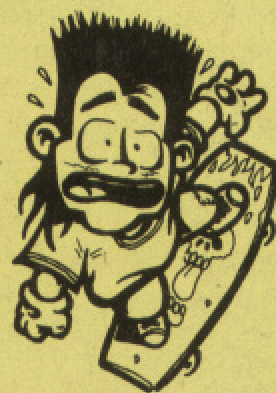


HE'S BROUGHT HIS DAD!

HEY DUDES! CHECK OUT THE TURTLES!

WELCOME TO MEAN MACHINES!





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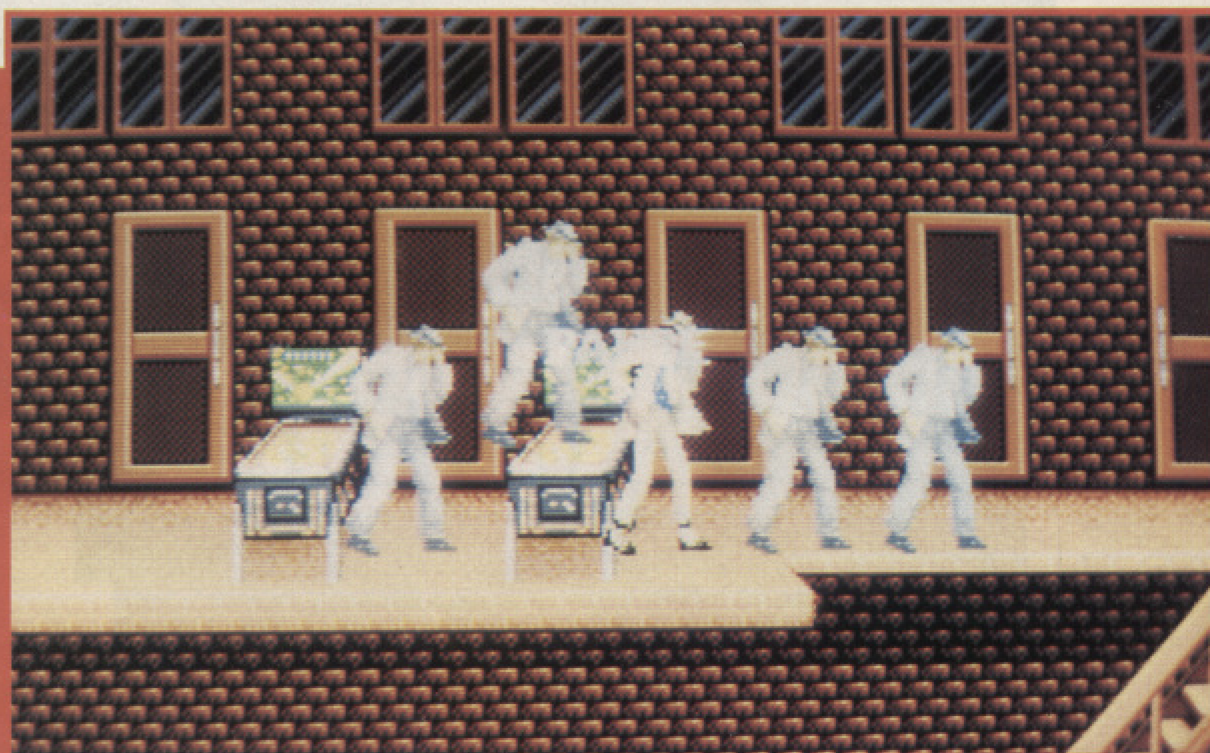
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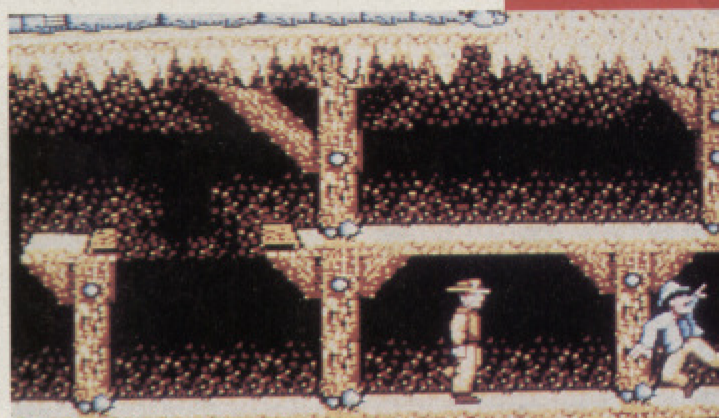
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TS







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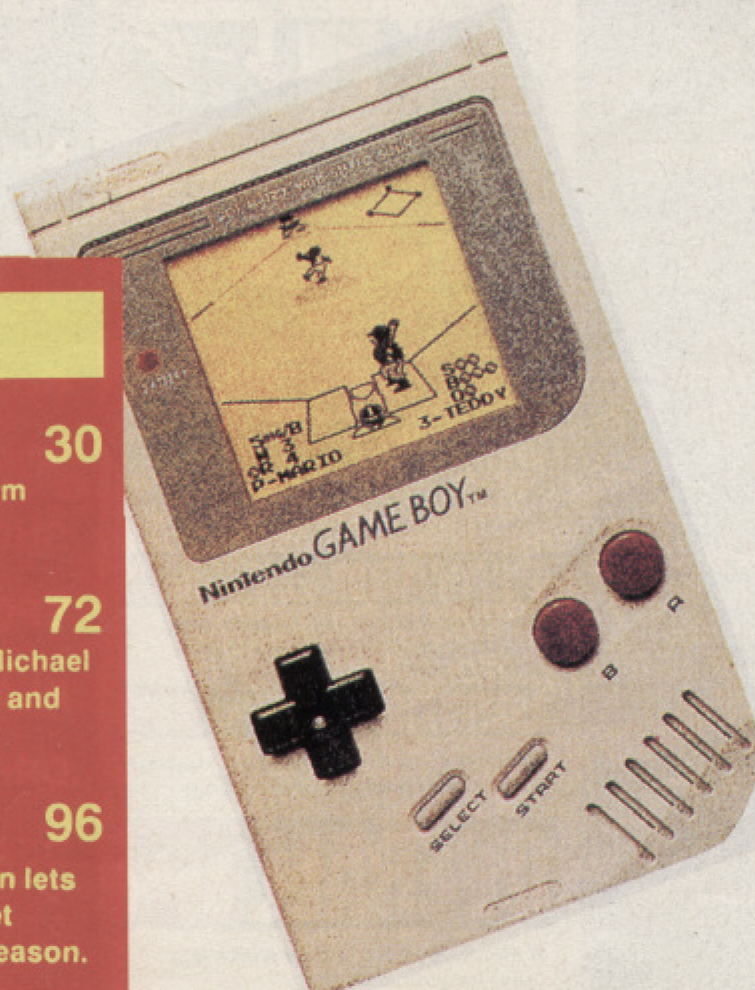
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COMPS

MEGAMAN II 30
This unbelievably addictive Nintendo platform game is mega, man!

MOONWALKER 72
Aaow! This superb Megadrive game of the Michael Jackson film features loads of music, magic and mayhem!

SUPER MONACO GP 96
Vroom! This stunning Megadrive conversion lets you whizz around the famous Monaco street circuit as well as race a whole Grand Prix season.



THE RATINGS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Here at MEAN MACHINES we are committed to giving you the most in-depth console reviews. Here's how our ratings system works.

GAME DIFFICULTY
This tells you how easy or tough the game is. If you're a novice player, easy games should keep you happy. If you're a veteran joystick-jockey, medium or hard games are recommended.

LIVES
Tells you how many times can you die and still return from the grave.

CONTINUES
Tells you how often you can restart from where you died. Beware: too many continues can allow you to finish the game too quickly, and seriously damage your enjoyment.

SKILL LEVELS
Many games let you fix the difficulty level for yourself, so you can increase the challenge if you get good at it. This tells you how many skill levels there are.

RESPONSIVENESS
Is it humanly possible to avoid that mutant's death-beam, or does the joystick refuse to obey your frantic commands? This section lets you know!

PRESENTATION
This is an important part of any game. Are the instructions clear (and in English)? Do the option screens make sense and look pretty? Is the screen well laid out? Is there plenty of in-game info? This rating tells you all.

GRAPHICS
This includes not only the quality of the sprites and their animation, but the backgrounds as well. Graphics are judged not only on their prettiness, but on how well they are suited to the game.

SOUND
The difference between a booming, catchy intro tune and a few weak bleeps that sound like a dying Spectrum is indicated here. Music and effects can make a big difference to a game, so don't ignore this factor.

NINTENDO REVIEW

LIFE FORCE

BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD

1-2 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 79%
One or two-player option and great screen layout.

GRAPHICS 86%
Detailed and colourful sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 83%
Very similar tunes and effects to the arcade version.

PLAYABILITY 85%
A bit difficult at first, but it's good, clean alien blasting all the way - and dead addictive too!

LASTABILITY 88%
Six levels of frantic action and the two-player option ensure a long-lasting challenge.

OVERALL 86%
A stunning shoot 'em up which is a must for your collection.

33 MEAN MACHINES

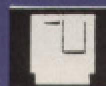
PLAYABILITY
Some games you just can't stop playing, no matter how late at night it is. This measures the addictiveness of the game, and how much you'll think about it - even when you're not playing it!

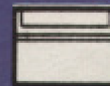
LASTABILITY
You don't want to spend your cash on something that will only last a week. Check this box out to judge if you are going to be playing it in a month, or be bored with it within a week.

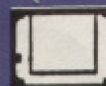
OVERALL
This is it. This mark takes into account all the above ratings and acts as a guide to the game's overall quality. If a game scores over 90%, it's a Megagame and is well worth buying!

PLAYERS
Simply tells you how many players can play the game - either simultaneously, or one after the other.

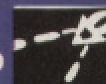
FORMAT
This icon tells you what type of cartridge the game is on - here's the full list:

NINTENDO 

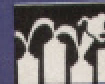
SEGA 

MEGADRIVE 

GAME TYPE
These nifty icons show you what sort of game it is - here's the full list:

SHOOT 'EM UP 

SPORTS GAME 

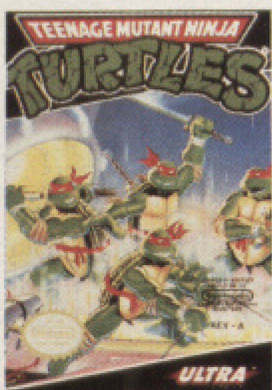
PLATFORM GAME 

DRIVING GAME 

BEAT 'EM UP 

ARCADE CONVERSION 

SWIM, SWORDFIGHT AND BAZOOKA-BLAST IN YOUR OWN LIVING ROOM FOR ONLY £79·99.



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Make that *cut-price* serious mayhem.

Because for under eighty quid, you get the Nintendo console, the handsets *and* the Turtle game pak.



Everything you need, in fact, to control the heroes in a half-shell. (Which is more than the evil Shredder ever managed to do.)

And don't forget, Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles are *not* available on any other console.



There's never been a better time to get into Nintendo.

So get down to your local video games stockist today. And let battle commence.



The World's Number One Game System.

LET'S GO!!!

A very warm welcome to MEAN MACHINES, the brand new all-consoles magazine. Yep, it's consoles all the way - you won't find anything about computers in these pages!

The machines we're covering are the Megadrive, Nintendo, Sega and the new Amstrad GX4000 (although there's nothing about it this issue, 'cos it's so new there are no games available for it yet). If you've got one of these machines (or all of them if you're really console crazy), stick with us. We guarantee that you won't find better reviews, news, previews and tips in any other magazine!

If you've flicked through the magazine, you'll have already seen that all the reviews and previews are at least two pages long. On them you'll see loads of glorious, full-colour screen shots showing all the action, fax boxes revealing tasty bits of game information or trivia, and comments about the game from both reviewers so that you get two opinions for the price of one. Plus there's the most detailed ratings system you'll ever see, telling you all the facts you want to know.

The tips section is bulging at the seams with highly useful hints and cheats, and there's our brilliant tips helpline for players who've got themselves stuck. There are five pages of red-hot news from the UK, Japan and America, charts showing the top-selling console games - as well as Q+A, the place where you can get all your questions answered!

We hope that you like the format and layout of the magazine. If you have any opinions - whether positive or negative, or ideas that you think might make MEAN MACHINES even better, write to us. We'll be only too pleased to hear from you.

Right! That just about wraps it up for this month. I'll see you in four weeks time...

WHO'S WHO?

JULIAN "JAZ" RIGNALL

Well known to readers of C+VG, our Jaz has a long history of gamesplaying expertise. He was twice crowned the UK Arcade Champion in the mid-80's, has many world record scores on both coin-ops and console games, and is current Captain of the UK Video Game Team (which won the European Championship title last year and the World Title this year). Arcade games are his favourite - but really he'll play anything that's good.



OZ BROWNE

Oz designs all the pages in the magazine. And even though he's amazingly busy he still manages to sneak into the games room for a quick blast - something like Thunderforce II will keep him amused for hours on end. When he's at home he relaxes by... playing on his Megadrive!



MATTHEW REGAN

Call him Matt. He was an Amiga fan before he joined MEAN MACHINES, but fell in love with consoles as soon as he walked into the office. He likes all sorts of games, but is happiest when his brain is being exercised as well as his reflexes.

GARY HARROD

He's the guy that paints the cover and draws all the pictures in the mag. But given half the chance he'll drop his crayons and finger paints and rush into the games room for a session on the latest console Mega Game. Arcade conversions are his favourite - he certainly took a long time taking photos of Truxton!

WHODUNNIT

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COMPETITION RULES

No EMAP employees or their immediate kin may enter, but everyone else can, apart from Dwayne Minton of West Wormwood because he's a wally. The Editor's decision is final, and no correspondence shall be entered into. So you can whinge as much as you like, but it won't get you anywhere.

FINALLY

Launching a magazine is no easy task. There have been many nervous breakdowns during the past four weeks, and many of us can't sit down any more because we've worked our bottoms off. But hey! That's publishing for you.

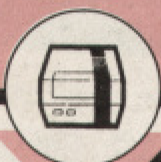
MEAN MACHINES ISSUE ZERO!

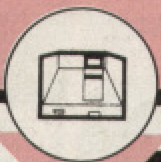
To tell you the truth, this isn't the first issue of MEAN MACHINES. Before this was MEAN MACHINES issue 0, a special ultra-limited test edition which was put together and shown to a select audience to see what they thought. Most of the original ideas were though to be good, and have been used in this edition of the magazine, but a few things have been changed - such as the logo! And before you ask, issue 0 of MEAN MACHINES was never on sale - the historic few we had printed are now stored in the deepest, dustiest corners of the MEAN MACHINES vault, and will never see the light of day again!

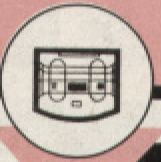
MEAN MACHINES HISTORY

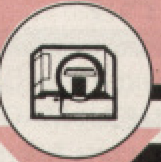
Regular readers of Computer and Video Games magazine will know the name MEAN MACHINES well - it's the all-consoles section that has been a part of C+VG for two years. But over that time the demand for a regular monthly consoles magazine has grown and grown, and as a result we have removed the column from the magazine and turned it into MEAN MACHINES monthly: a magazine dedicated to the Nintendo, Sega, Megadrive and Amstrad GX4000.

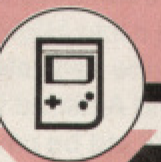
But what of C+VG? Well, it'll still be covering these machines, but instead of putting them into a single small section of the mag, consoles reviews will be treated like normal reviews - so there'll now be more console coverage than ever before! So if you want to know exactly what's going on in the consoles world, make sure you buy MEAN MACHINES and Computer and Video Games every month.





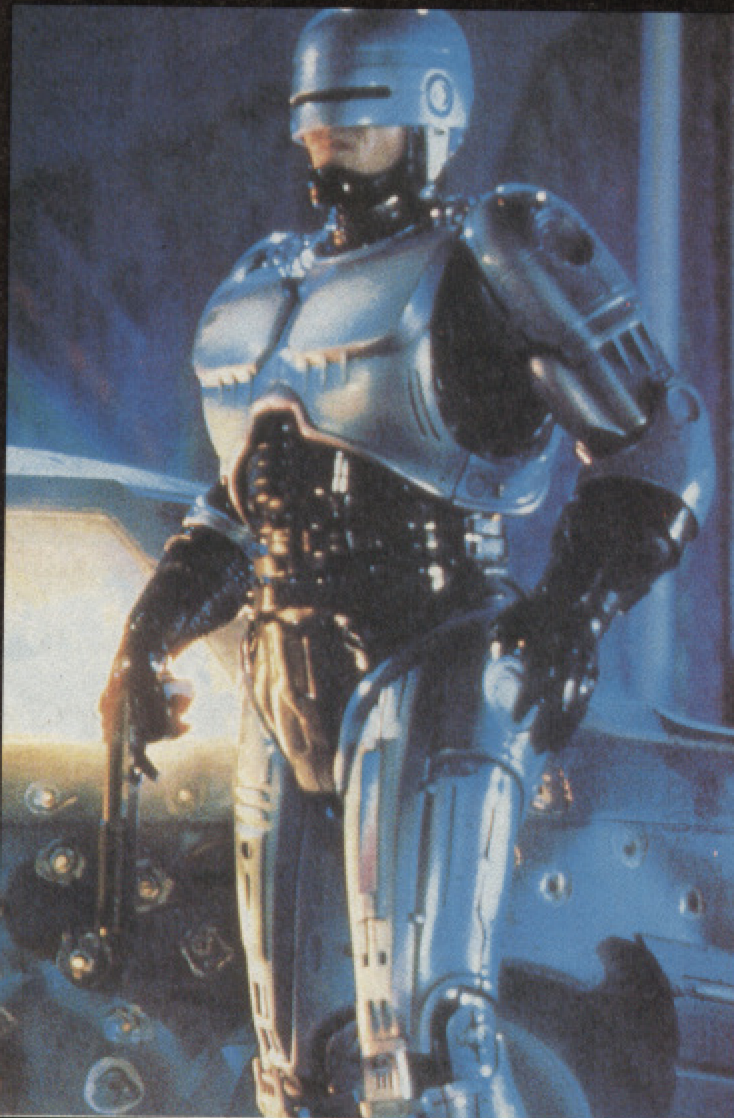






ROBOCOP II

British software house Ocean have just announced their first Nintendo game - Robocop II. It's based on the film that will premiere in mid October and features everyone's favourite tin cop as he battles the evil drug barons who are causing chaos in Detroit by selling a highly addictive drug called Nuke. The game is mainly platform-based, but there are also two puzzle sections and an Operation Wolf-style shooting gallery. Julian saw the game last month and reckons it's the best thing he's seen on the Nintendo for a long time. Watch this space for more pictures...





AND ROBOCOP TOO

Robocop also features in Ocean's first Gameboy title. Based on the first film and playing very similarly to the massive-selling computer versions that were released last Christmas, Robocop should be just as massive in hand-held form.

EXCITING NEW CONSOLES LAUNCHED!

This year's brilliant Computer Entertainment Show at Earl's Court saw the UK launch of two crucial consoles. MEAN MACHINES brings you the lowdown...

MEGA, MAN, MEGA!

First off is the Sega Megadrive, eagerly awaited in this country since the first reports of the machine arrived from Japan over two years ago. It features arcade-quality graphics and sound and has plenty of amazing games available for it. All this potential does not come cheap, however, as the machine retails for around £190 - but this includes the game Altered Beast. Machines should be in the shops by the time you read this

GET YOURSELF A HAND JOB

Nintendo have finally released their hand-held games machine, the Gameboy. This small wonder has taken the US by storm and looks set to do the same here: it features a black and white screen, but the graphics are great. The package comprises an interplay lead (to allow you to hook up your machine to another for simultaneous two-player battles), batteries, the excellent puzzle game Tetris and of course the Gameboy itself. This package will set you back about £70 and is in the shops now - so start saving!



MASTER SYSTEM GOES MANIC

Three conversions of classic games are to be released on the Sega Master System early next year via the auspices of new software company, Techmagic. First up is Pacmania, starring that wacky isometric pill-eating yellow dude, PacMan and his arch-enemies, the Ghosts. This version apparently boasts secret rooms not included in the other formats. Wow!

Populous is also due for release before Easter 1991. This game casts you as nothing less than a God who is responsible for his followers. If this is half as good as the Megadrive version (previewed in next month's MEAN MACHINES), it'll be a corker.

And finally, later on next year expect the Master System premiere of Shadow of The Beast. This caused a lot of excitement on the Amiga when released because of its amazing graphics - unfortunately the gameplay wasn't so hot. However, this is going to be tweaked on the Sega for maximum enjoyment! We wait with baited breath.

INSECTOR X

A Megadrive horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up just released in Japan is Insector X, loosely based on the arcade game. It features what looks like a macho laser-toting fairy (the winged kind) who flies over the terrain blasting robotic insects who're terrorising the neighbourhood. There are plenty of extra weapons to collect and heaps of end-of-level guardians to take care of. We'll be checking the game out in a forthcoming issue - so watch out for it.

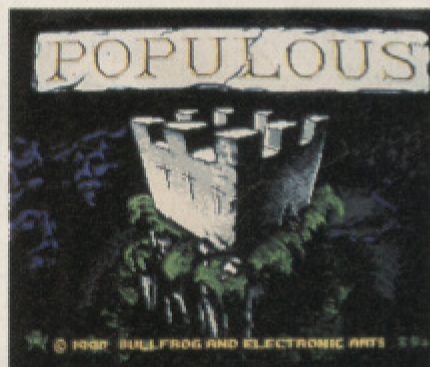




EA HIT CONSOLES

Electronic Arts are soon to be releasing Megadrive software in this country. First batch will be Populous, that amazing God-simulation that seems to be popping up on all machines, Budokan, an in-depth martial arts simulation featuring full training options and over 25 different moves, and Zany Golf, a highly entertaining mini-golf simulation. All will appear at the end of October.

Later on in the year, expect to see Megadrive versions of Battle Squadron, a slick up-the-screen blaster with extra weapons, Sword of Sodan, an arcade beat 'em up with huge sprites and something utterly astounding indeed. You'll have to wait until next month to find out what it is! Aren't we rotten!





JAPANESE MAGS

If you're really astoundingly keen on consoles and have plenty of bucks to spend (or a very compliant parent) you can get loads of information from the amazing Japanese console mags that are available (though very difficult to find) in this country. They are all in Japanese (of course) but the huge numbers of pictures of games we can only dream of seeing over in this country (particularly the stuff on the new Nintendo console) make them essential reading (well, looking anyway) for console addicts everywhere. Here's the Mean Machines top three:

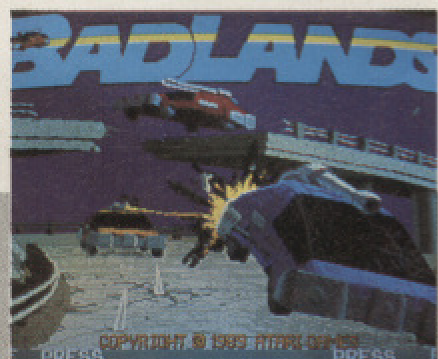
FAMITSU EXPRESS: All consoles, brilliant pictures.

MEGADRIVE FAN: More of the same but just for the Megadrive

LOG-IN: General all-round computer title, but with lots of console coverage and particularly good info on new developments like CD-ROMs and stuff.

Where can you get 'em? Well one good place is Nippon Books in London - but don't say we told you. Cost varies but you won't see much (or any) change from a fiver.







DOMARK'S DONE A DEAL

Another UK software company who's just signed up to produce Sega games is Domark. As we go to press, they haven't yet announced which games they're going to program - but their home computer releases include The Spy Who Loved Me, a superb game of the James Bond film, and a whole heap of coin-ops, including Escape From the Planet of the Robot Monsters, Badlands, Hard Drivin', Klax and Toobin'! We want Robot Monsters and Spy Who Loved Me please!

GOLF CLUBS AND WOODEN CLUBS

US Gold have just announced the next two games they'll be releasing on the Sega - Leaderboard and Heroes of the Lance. Leaderboard is a conversion of the computer golf game, and even though it's getting on for four years old, it's still one of the best golf simulations ever released. The Master System version should be a corker!

Heroes of the Lance is a conversion of the computer arcade-style role playing game, and features all the characters that appeared in the Dungeons and Dragons books! If RPGs are your cup of tea, look out for this - apparently it's going to be a real winner.



THE LAST NINJA

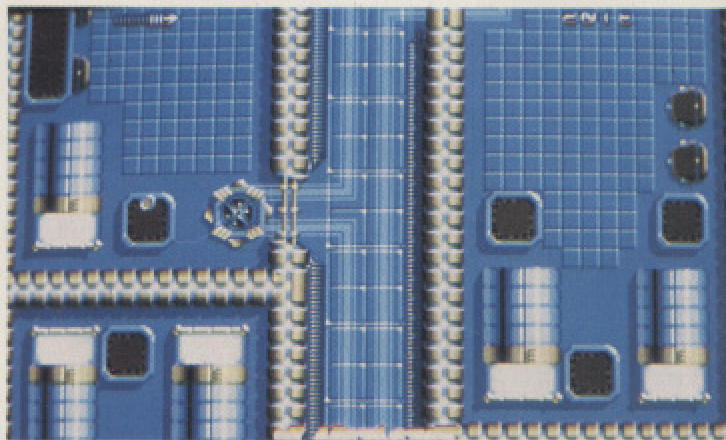
System 3's highly successful computer game, Last Ninja II, is to appear on the Nintendo some time next year. It's a sort of isometric 3D game which casts you as the eponymous Last Ninja, who's on a baddie-bashing quest for truth, justice and freedom.

We'll be taking a good look at this game in a forthcoming issue - watch out for it.

PARADROID STORMS NINTENDO

Hewson's Paradroid, one of Julian Rignall's all-time favourite Commodore 64 games looks set to turn up on at least one and possibly several different consoles. Nothing is finalised yet but playtesters for at least one Japanese company were apparently well impressed with Paradroid's classic mixture of pure out-and-out blasting and genuine strategic thinking.

Paradroid won't be the first offering from this UK company to get consolised. Previous offerings have included the fabulous Nebulus (renamed Tower Toppler) and the nearly-as-fabulous Cybernoid. If the rumours are true we can't wait!



SPOT A CONSOLE CORNER

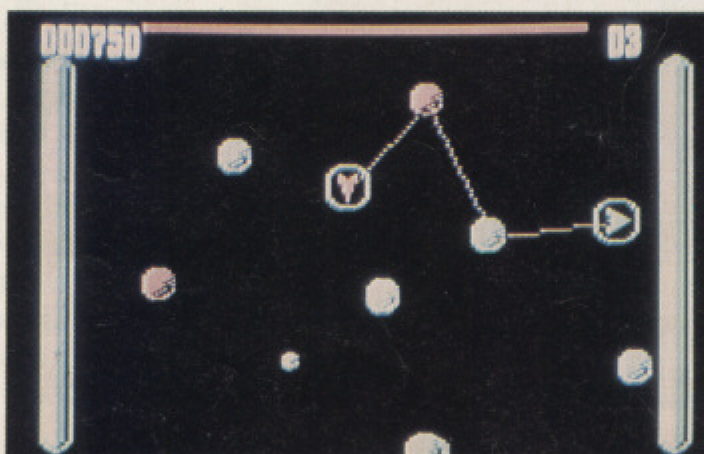
Have you noticed how many references there are to Consoles in American TV programmes and films. Not obvious things like the Super Mario Bros cartoon, but gags and side mentions in things like Family Ties and Parenthood (Grandma was playing a Nintendo near the end of the film).

Here at MEAN MACHINES we thought we ought to celebrate all this media coverage by awarding a special prize each month (if we get any entries that is) for the most interesting reference spotted about a console on a TV programme.

So if you're watching the telly and someone plays with or even refers to a console, jot down what is said, what programme it was on and send it off to us at: I'VE SPOTTED A CONSOLE ON TELLY, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Don't forget to tell us what console you have and you could win a brand new game courtesy of us.

ACCOLADE'S E-MOTIONAL HARMONY

A version of E-Motion is to be released on the Game Boy under the name of Harmony (as it's known in the States). Instead of multicoloured balls (oo-er) this has triangles, squares, and circles to represent the molecules of the original. Harmony includes all the levels of the home computer versions, and is promoted in the US as a stress reliever. Julian and Matt strongly dispute this - addictive though it is, the game can be infuriating beyond belief!



CONSOLES WE ONCE LOVED:

NUMBER ONE: ATARI VCS 2800

The Grandfather of all cartridge consoles is the ancient Atari VCS. Launched in 1978 at the price of £129.99, this beastie was quite a stunning machine for its time. It featured colour graphics, decent sound and (for then) a huge memory - all of 4K. Games available for it included top arcade titles like Asteroids, Space Invaders and Lunar Lander - not surprising, really, that it took the world by storm. Tens of millions of machines were sold, and during the very early eighties, loads of software was released for it.

However, when the more powerful computers such as the Commodore 64 appeared on the scene in 1983, the VCS began to look very dated indeed, and the sales of the machine and software slowed down to a crawl. However, over the last seven years the machine has still continued to sell in small numbers, and even now this ancient relic can be bought today - it costs around £30.00 and games cost about £10.00! It might be cheap, but by today's standards it's a very bad buy - the graphics look as though they're constructed of lego blocks, and the tiny memory means that games are very limited and repetitive! Still, if you manage to get the chance to play on this museum piece, give it a go. It's great fun playing this slice of history and seeing what people thought was brilliant back in olden times!

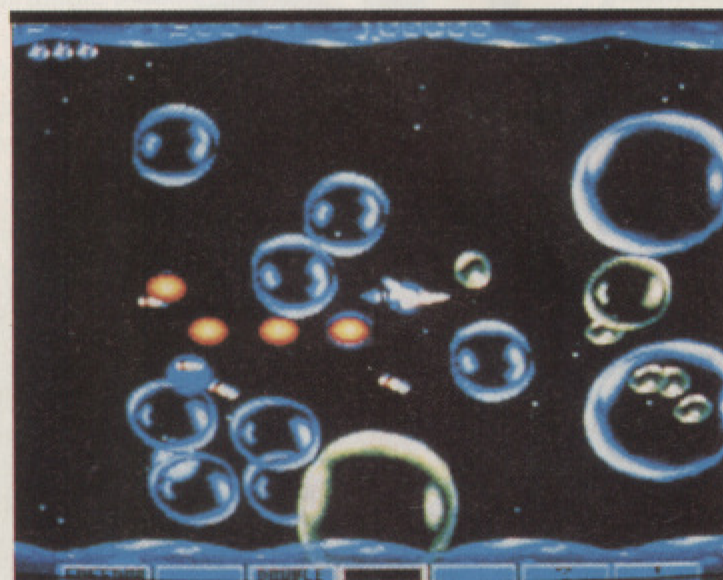
NEWS FROM JAPAN

IT'S NEARLY SUPER FAMICOM TIME

November 21st is the day that Nintendo have set for the Japanese launch of their Super Famicom - the 16-bit Nintendo. Two million machines will flood the market and Nintendo expect them all to be snapped up before Christmas. Those who pooh-pooh their claims might be less sceptical when they've read the following facts. The machine will cost £120.00, is stacked full of custom processors that can produce filled-3D graphics, rotate the screen, scroll four different playfields at any speed and direction simultaneously and produce giant sprites, as well as make 12-channel digitally encoded (that's better than sampled) sound via its PCM sound chip.

"A-ha!", we hear the cynics amongst you yell, "it doesn't matter if the machine's brilliant - what about the software". Well, apart from being 100% compatible with all existing Nintendo software (giving it an instant library of some 400 games, many of which are brilliant), there's a whole load of new, specially-written software that'll be available when the machine is launched. Arcade titles include Irem's R-Type II, Capcom's Final Fight, Konami's Gradius III, Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts and Jaleco's Big Run. Also coming out are Populous and Sim City (two superb "God" games that, respectively let you control a race of your own people and construct cities of your own), a golf game, an amazing looking flying game, a racing game called F-Zero, a conversion of the rather ordinary UK computer game, Bombuzal and of course the real biggie - Super Mario IV!









I BRING YOU HELLFIRE

A rather jolly horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up which didn't really set the world alight when it appeared in the arcades last year was Toaplan's Hellfire. But when it's released in Japan on the Megadrive later on this month, it should be huge. It's the usual power-up, big end-of-level baddies affair, but has a neat feature in the way that you can select four different directions of fire and also has a brilliant series of soundtracks. We'll be previewing it as soon as possible.



NEWS FROM THE USA





TOTAL RECALL

Arnie Schwarzenegger's latest blockbustin' movie, Total Recall, is about to be Nintendo-ised by Acclaim. The game is a multi-level affair, featuring an almost-cute Arnie as he battles through a Martian city to save the mutants. The game will be released in America this month - when we'll see it in this country is anyone's guess.



TENGEN GOES MEGADRIVE

Coin-op giants, Tengen, are working on several new Megadrive titles, which will be launched first in America. Cyberball has been out for about four weeks, now, and is a conversion of the robotic American Football coin-op. It has all the features of the original machine, right down to the speech, music and moves - great stuff.

Klax is another conversion, and should be available in the States by the time you read this. It's

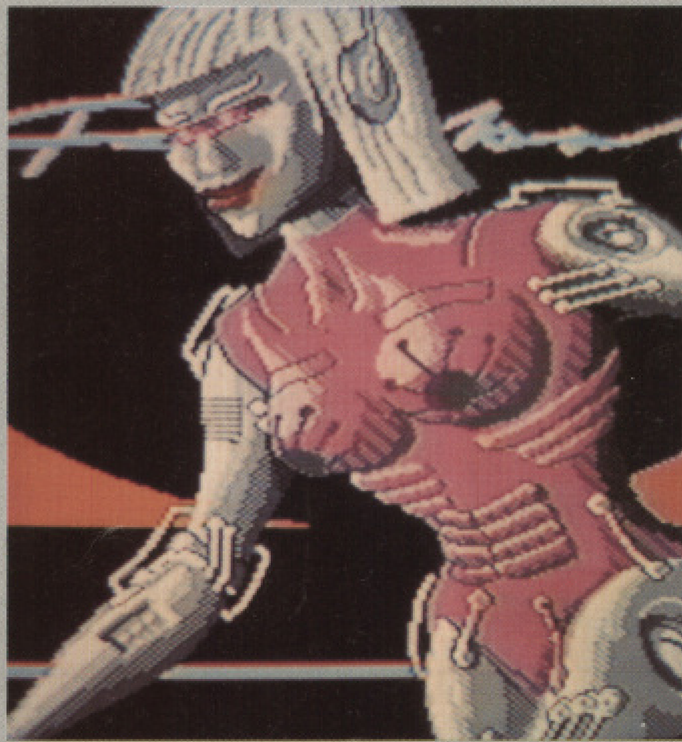




Although there's no news of a British release, Dick Tracy - The Movie has been released on the Nintendo in the States. A platform game with comic-style interludes, Dick has to track down Big Boy (hmm..), Itchy, Flattop, and the rest of the crooks, as well as scan mug shots in order to gain extra information.

BOTS AND BALLS

Nintendo are releasing the first ever officially licensed pinball game - William's Pinbot. The lads here at MEAN MACHINES reckon it's a winner. Although the graphics are not the prettiest ever, the ball movement and responsiveness make this a very accurate portrayal of the real thing. Unfortunately there are no plans to release Pinbot here until some time next year but expect a full review when it arrives.





REVIEW

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

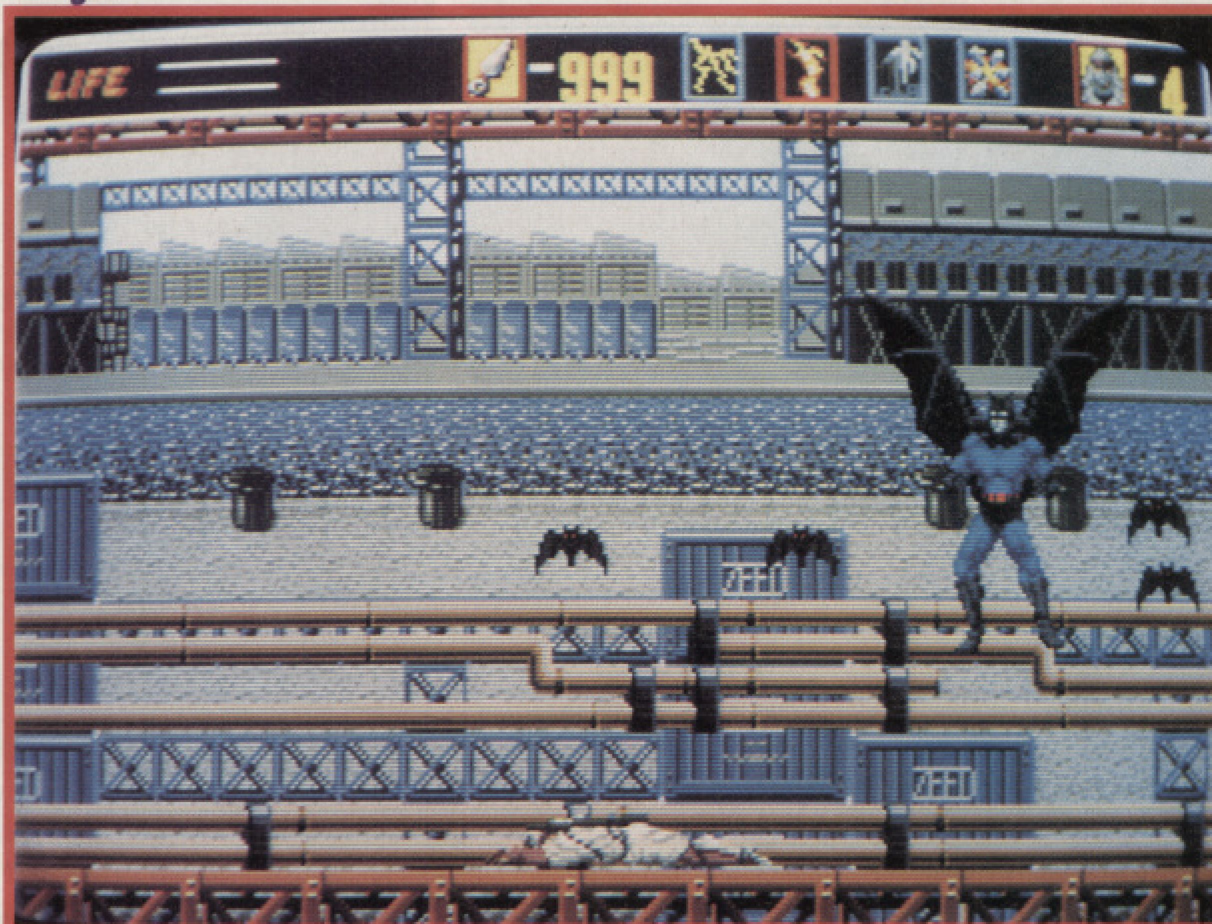


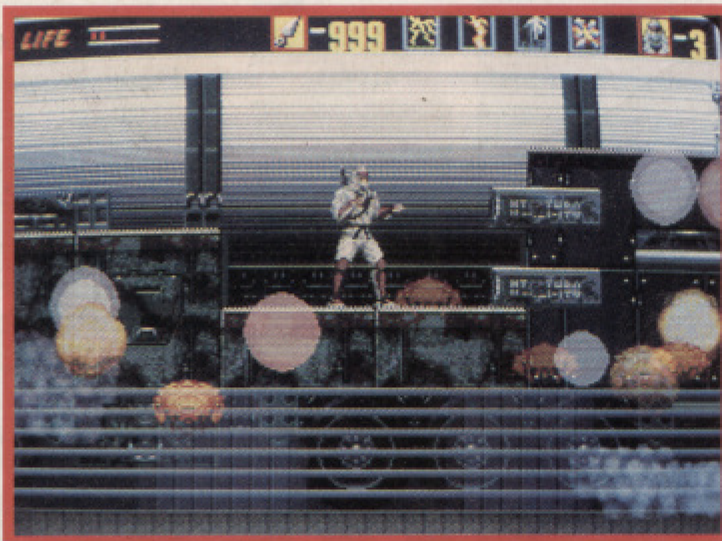
Become the hardest Ninja imaginable - swing your katana, throw your shuriken, use your magic, and generally beat seven types of doo-doo out of the fiendish foes determined to stop your progress. Anyway, it's a good thing you can do all these stunts as the baddies (the Zeeb) have kidnapped your girlfriend: to rescue her you must travel around the world, destroying their bases as you go.

Shinobi carries with him a limited number of shuriken (which can be replenished as the game advances) as well as his sword. He can also kick his foes, jump, somersault, and do a combination somersault/shuriken-spray attack. The best form of attack however is the devastating Ninjitsu magic; this comes in various forms depending on the game's level, and is crucial in order to defeat the end-of-level bosses.

With eight stages, each subdivided into three parts, and a big baddie to beat at the end of each one, Revenge of Shinobi is a huge game. It includes animated sequences and a host of options. Check out the screen shots....

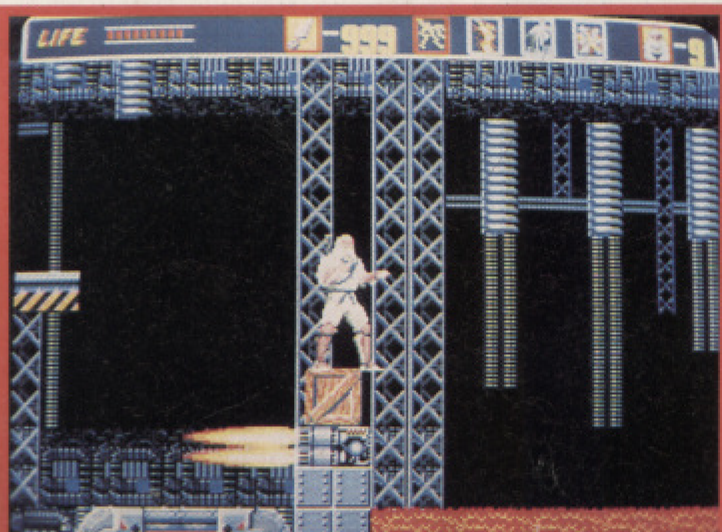
▼ *Don't accept death - get up and have another go!*





▲ ***If you want this many shuriken (and who doesn't), watch an upcoming Tips section!***

▼ ***Wait for the pillars to descend, then jump.***



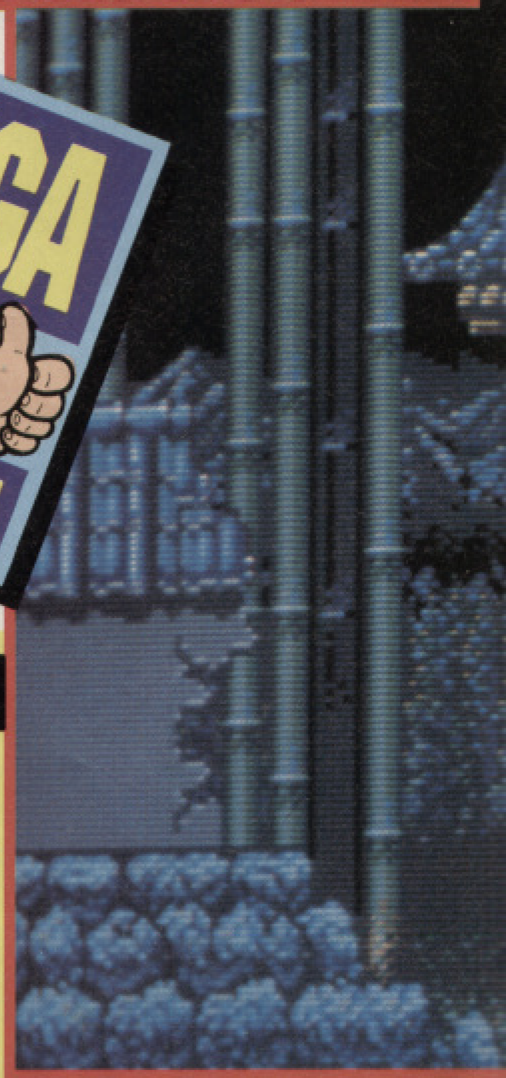
WHERE IN THE WORLD...?

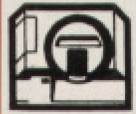
The locations are many and varied as you traverse the globe. You start in a dojo in the Far East and then progress to caves and waterfalls. Other locations include skyscrapers, trains, motorways, the back of a lorry, docklands, Chinatown, and even an army base! Perhaps the most exotic locale is on board an airship. Here caution is required to avoid being sucked out and falling to your doom!

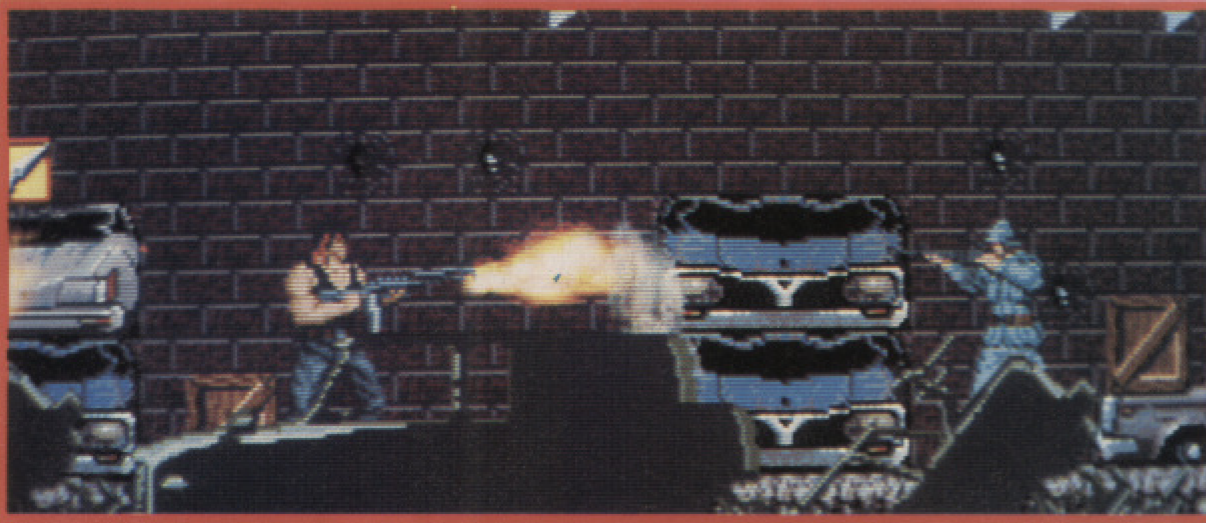


BEAT THE BOSSES

As in all games of this type, the end of each level is patrolled by a giant guardian who must be beaten. On the first level there's a giant robot samurai, followed by a Shadow Ninja in a disco! Then there's a giant bomb, guarded by a laser defence system, a Terminator Android, a giant truck packed with missiles, Spiderman and Batman lookalikes, Godzilla, and finally the head baddie himself - The Master. As you can imagine, he's a real toughie!







AN ARMY OF BADDIES

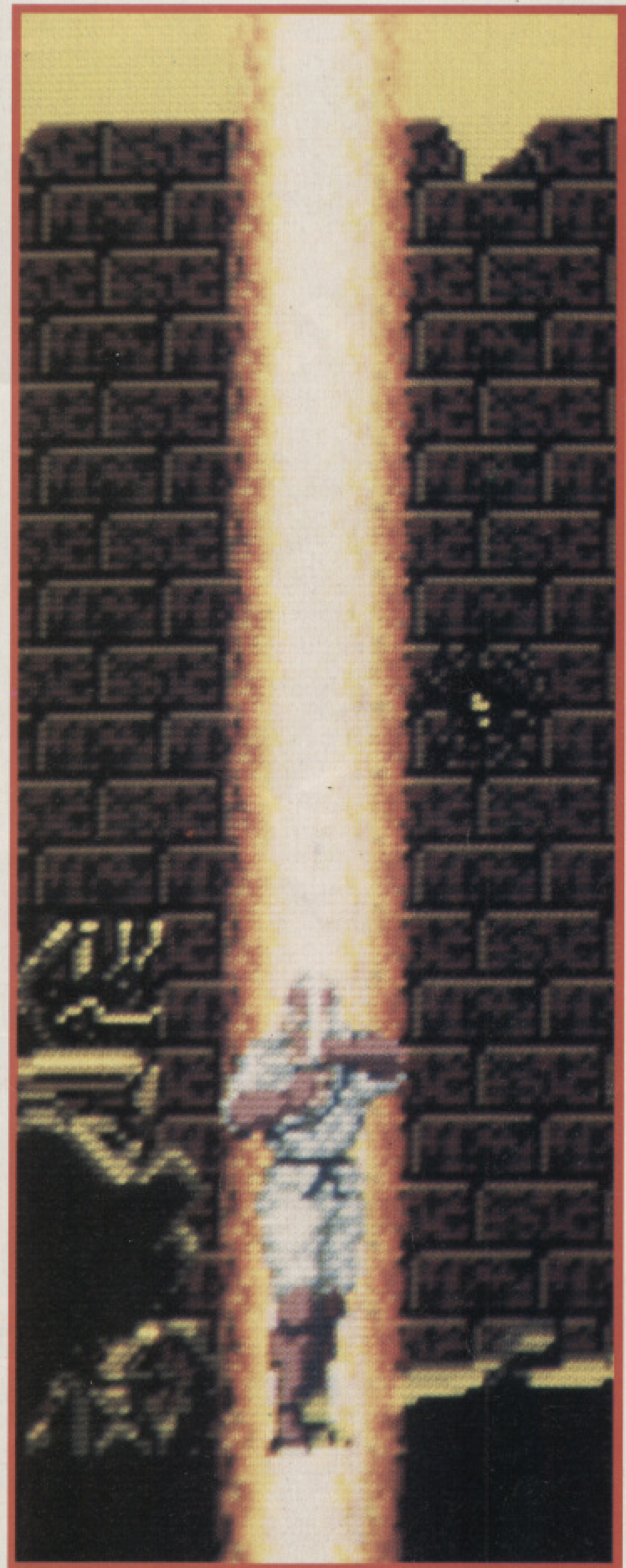
The Zeeb army is a large one, and features a variety of soldiers. On level one there's ninja, flying ninja, robot dogs and samurai. On later levels there are machine-gun wielding soldiers, grenade throwers, Rambo lookalikes with giant flame throwers, karate experts, female ninja and robot defence systems! And they're all out to stop you!

COMMENT



MATT

This has to be one of the most outstanding games on the Megadrive - or any console, come to that. The graphics are exquisite, the music superb, and the gameplay out of this world! I was suitably wowed by this game, and you will be too: there aren't many games around that are a match for this, which really pushes the Megadrive to its limit. I can assure you that you will be ecstatic with this if you buy it - it's what you bought a Megadrive for in the first place!





IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC

Shinobi has access to four types of Jitsu magic, and needs them in order to get past the bosses.

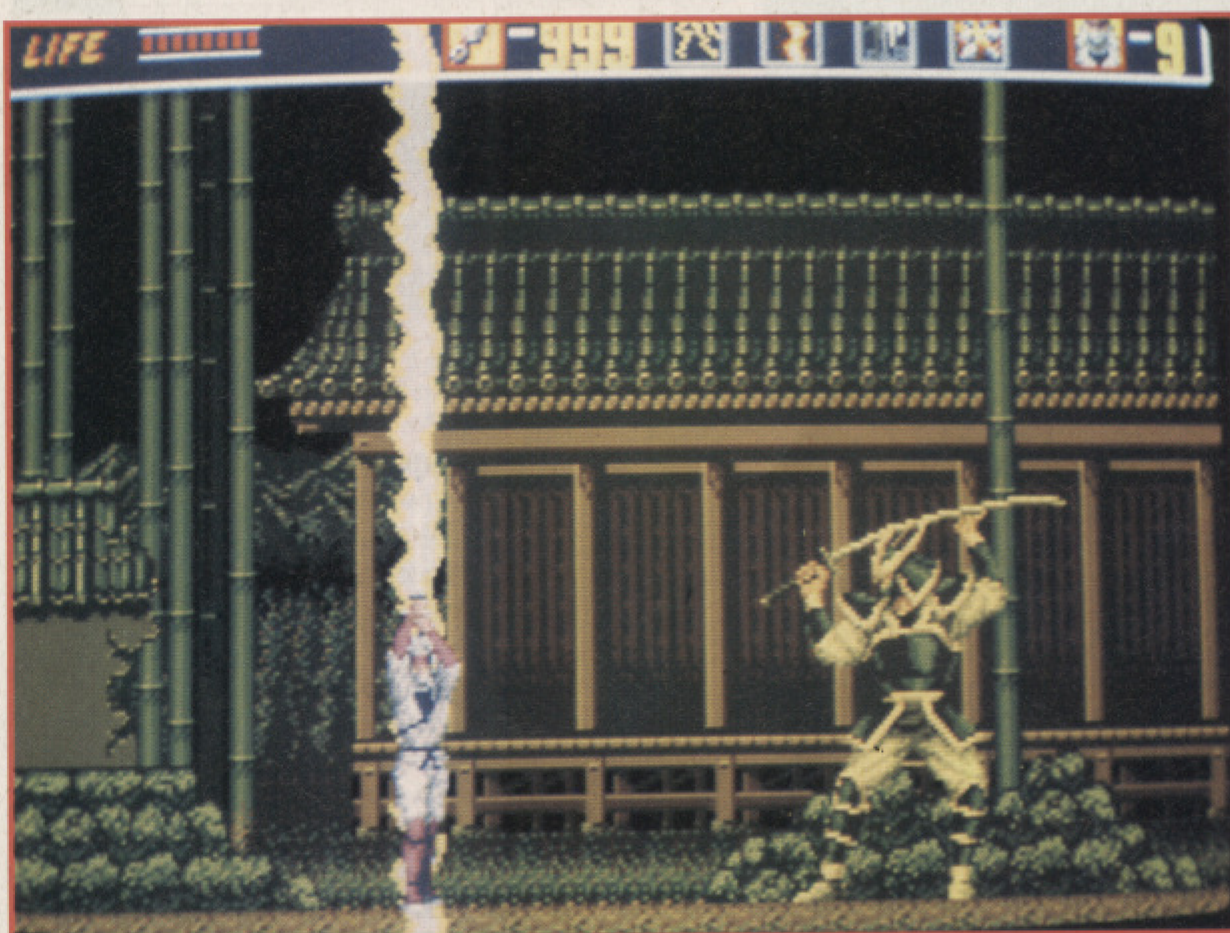
FUSHIN: Creates flickering after-images of Shinobi. These take all the damage for you until there's none left.

IKAZUCHI: Causes lightning around Shinobi's body which protects him.

KARIU: This magic creates sheets of flame which scour the screen, giving any baddies serious grief.

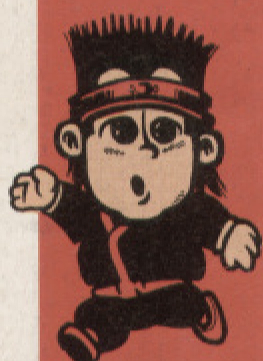
MIJIN: Makes Shinobi explode in ritual suicide. Loses a life, but has a devastating effect on the opponent.

▼ *Unleash your magic to devastating effect!*



▲ *The first guardian - climb the wall on the left and let loose your shuriken!*

COMMENT



JULIAN

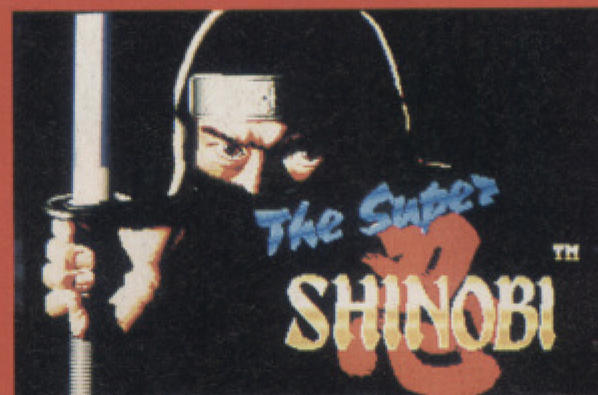
I'd be more than impressed if I'd played this game in the arcades. But on the Megadrive? Wow! It's an absolute treat for the ears and eyes. Each level is a graphical masterpiece, from the depths of Chinatown to the top of the tallest skyscrapers, and the animated opening sequence will leave you gasping with admiration. The sprites are simply superb - the animation on all of the enemies and Shinobi himself just has to be seen to be appreciated. On top of that are the incredible rock soundtracks and stunning sound effects! All that would be useless without decent gameplay, but Revenge of Shinobi doesn't disappoint here. It's challenging and amazingly addictive and keeps you glued to the machine for hours at a time - I just didn't want to stop playing. Revenge of Shinobi really shows off the abilities of the Megadrive - if there's one game to buy for it, it's this!



SECRET BONUSES

Revenge of Shinobi is packed full of secret bonuses - somersaulting and firing in certain places may uncover extra energy, bonus lives or even ninja magic! They're all tricky to find, but expert ninja should be able to discover them all!



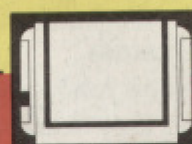


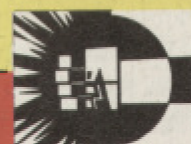
BY: SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE DATE: OCT
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 9
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 4
RESPONSIVENESS: NINJA QUICK







PRESENTATION 95%

Stunning opening sequence - and continues to impress throughout the game.

GRAPHICS 91%

Highly polished with some parallax scrolling that'll knock your socks off.

SOUND 94%

Loads of incredible tunes and effects!

PLAYABILITY 95%

So addictive and easy to get to grips with you'll be drooling.

LASTABILITY 90%

The game seems never-ending and the multiple skill levels add plenty of long-lasting appeal.

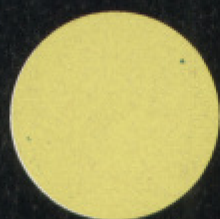
OVERALL 94%

Utterly brilliant in every way. If you don't make this your next purchase you're mad!

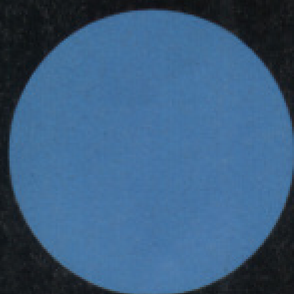
POWARCADE



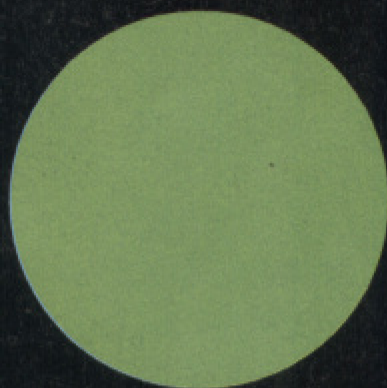
BUILT BY LEADING ARCADE MANUFACTURER



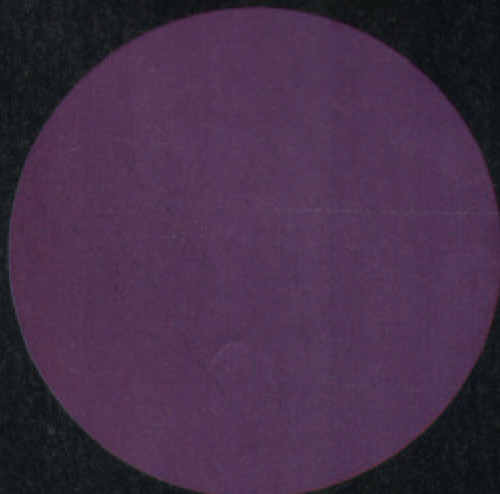
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16 bit: mega drive





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SEGA from *Virgin*

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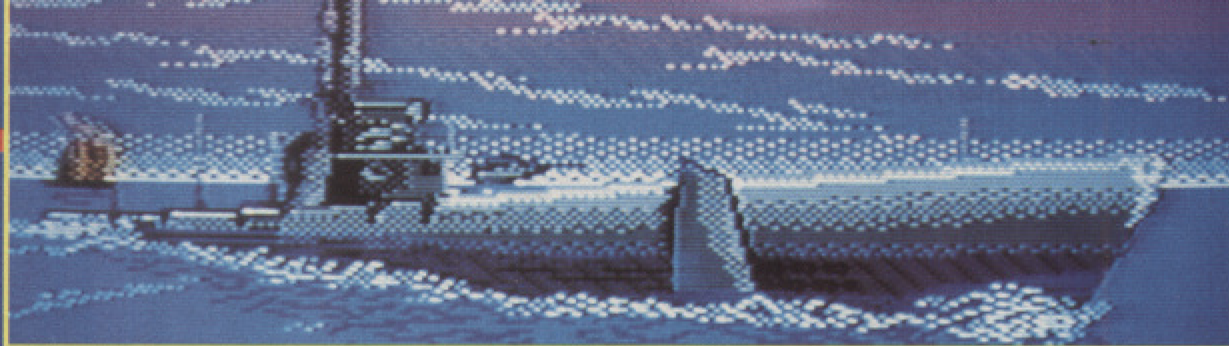


Power Base Converter



Arcade Power Stick





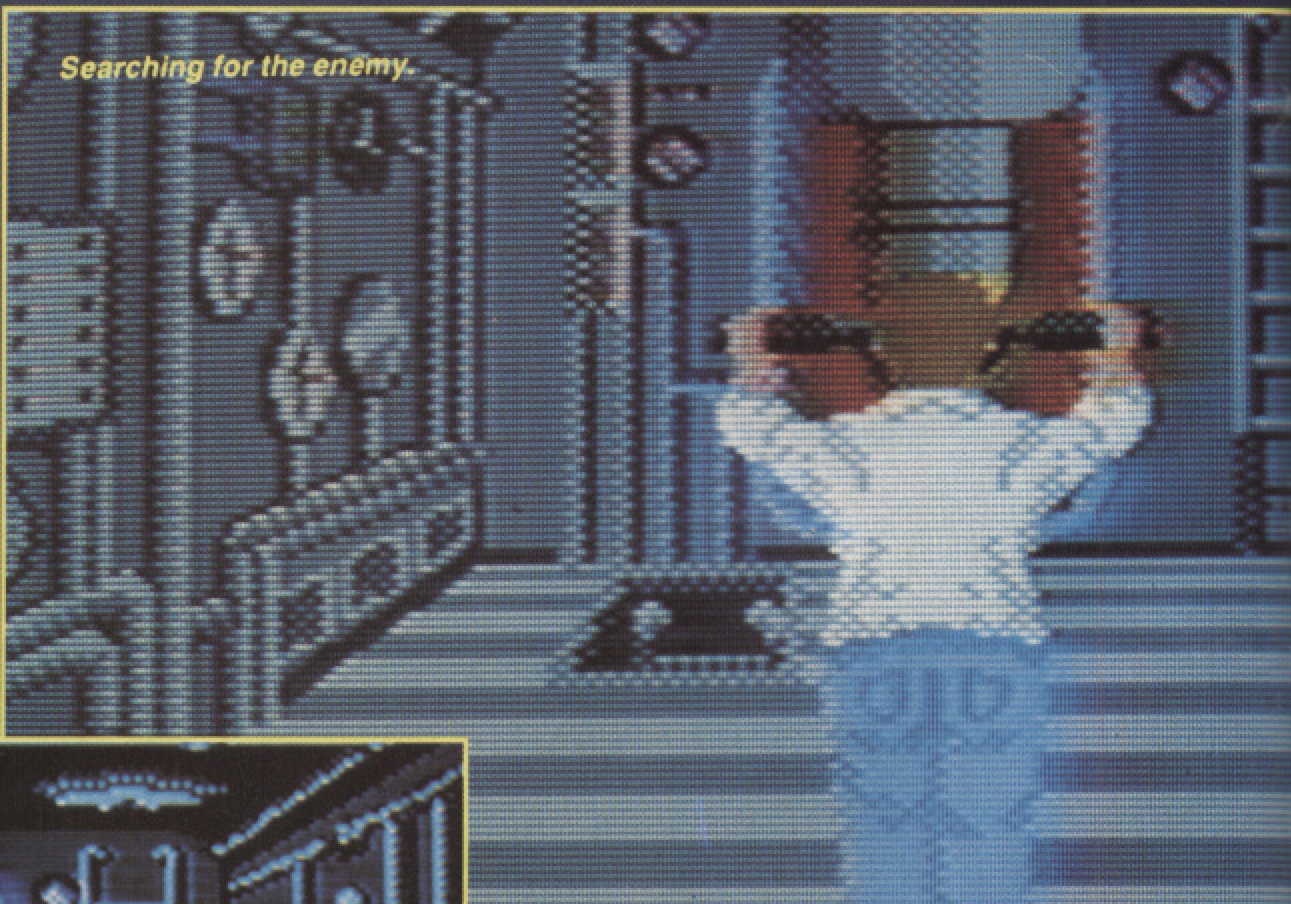
SILENT SERVICE



Silent Service casts you as a submarine commander during World War Two. You must hunt down convoys and sink them while avoiding the destroyers that guard them. The game switches between views from your periscope and strategic displays of your vessel, and maps may be accessed to pinpoint the enemy's location.

On-board sonar warns you of approaching destroyers and lets you know when the enemy has been hit by your torpedoes or gun. Options allow you to select practice modes or go straight into missions which include night attacks, surface raids, and cat-and-mouse actions with the depth charge carrying destroyers.

Successful hunting requires close shots but it is often better to keep your distance and manouevre into a position that allows an unaware convoy to steam straight towards you, saving you from having to chase it all over the Pacific!



Searching for the enemy.



Don't forget to check your maps for enemy movements!

SUB-OPTIONS

The difficulty of your mission is determined firstly by your rank (which varies from midshipman to captain). Other choices to make life more dangerous include limited visibility, zig-zagging convoys, deadlier destroyers, and even the chance that some of your torpedoes are duds!

WORSE THINGS HAPPEN AT SEA

Submarine crews during the last war did not lead glamorous lives. They spent weeks at sea in cramped, unhygienic conditions in constant fear of attack from the surface, knowing that if hit by depth charges they faced a cold and terrifying death. Supplies were limited by space, so illness caused by vitamin deficiencies were common, as were psychological problems because of overcrowding.



▲ *A little closer next time!*



▲ ***The map screen - you can zoom in or out to locate the fleets.***

▼ ***A ship has been sighted - so check the distance before firing.***



COMMENT

MATT

Silent Service is one of those rare creatures: a strategy game for the Nintendo. It has a depth (no pun intended) that is normally found in 16 bit computer games. In that sense the game is a refreshing change from platform and shoot em up games. The graphics are good and the array of options make the game easy to get into, but I found the game somewhat lacking in atmosphere and real excitement, especially as there can be long gaps between the action. Despite this the game is a worthy addition to any collection and is up to Microprose's usual high standards.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

LIMITED VISIBILITY
CONVOY ZIG ZAGS
NO DUD TORPEDOES
REPAIRS UNDER FIRE
STANDARD DESTROYERS
CLOSE CONVOYS

SKILL LEVEL 1 TO 4:
1/MIDSHIPMAN

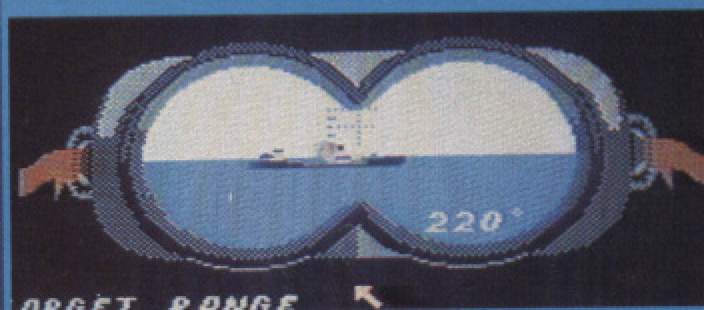
OVERALL DIFFICULTY LEVEL:1
CONTINUE

◀ ***The selection screen - decide how realistic you want your mission to be.***

KNOW THE SCORE

Each enemy vessel is worth "points" based on its tonnage. Therefore tankers tend to be worth more than troop ships in your attempts to cripple the Japanese war effort. Destroyers aren't particularly heavy, but it's a good idea to sink these first - before they sink you.

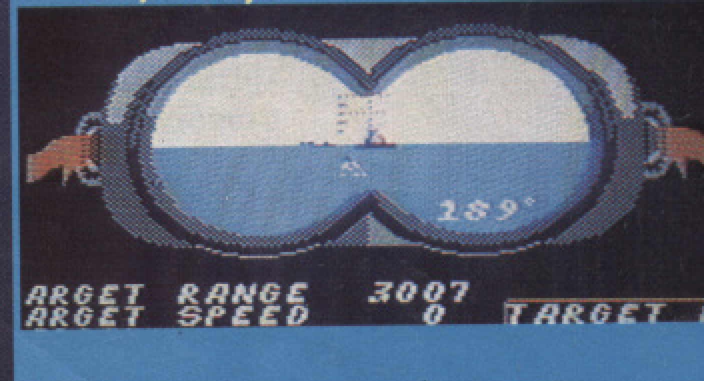
▼ ***He's in your sights, and you're closing fast! Firing torpedoes.....***



▼ ***A hit! But at this speed you're going to collide with the ship. Better make sure it's going to sink by firing another.***



▼ ***He's sinking fast, but issue the order to dive. The destroyer's near, and depth charges can ruin your day!***

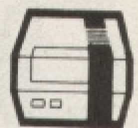


▼ ***Check the guages to get an overall guide to the state of your sub.***



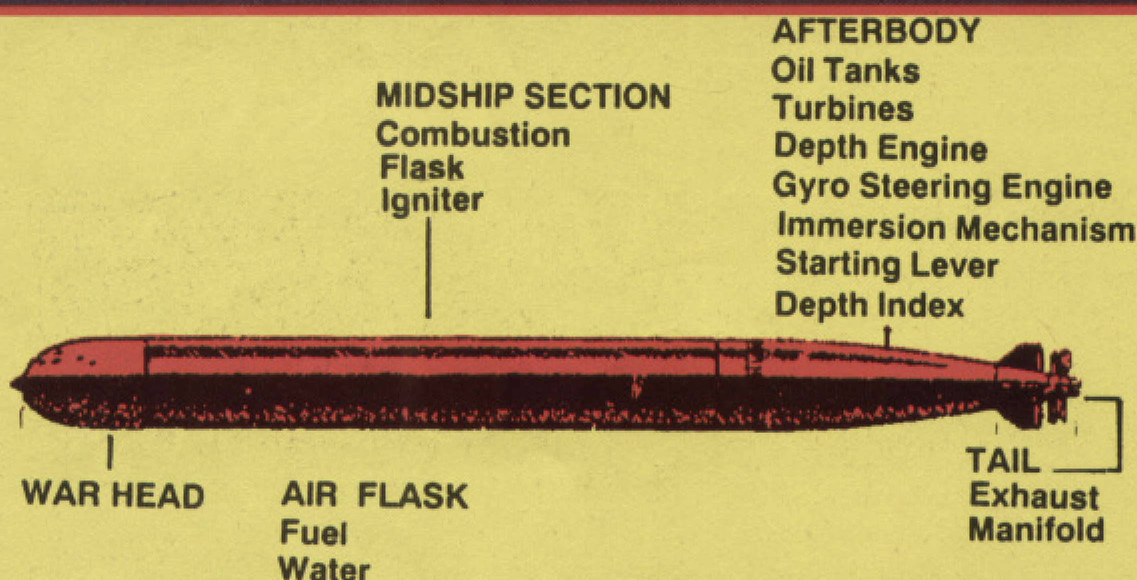
▼ ***Sonar reports help to determine if your attacks are successful.***







▲ The damage screen allows you to locate problem areas, as well as giving you a pretty picture!



TYPICAL TORPEDO

THE HUNTED

Japanese convoys consisted of cargo ships, tankers, troop ships and escorts of destroyers. Of these, the tankers, with their vital supplies of oil, were the most important targets to the American subs. The sonar equipment carried by the convoys was top notch and their gunnery was greatly feared. However their surface radar and depth charges were not too efficient, allowing the subs to make devastating night raids on Japanese shipping.

COMMENT



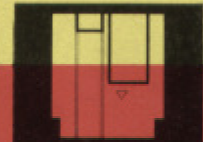
JULIAN

I'm not usually a fan of this type of game - there are far too many controls and not enough things to blow up for my liking! However, practice makes perfect, and once you get into the game, the action becomes quite tense as you start hunting down and destroying war ships before they get you. The multitude of difficulty options gives the game plenty of lasting appeal and maintains the challenge. I wouldn't recommend this to an arcade fan, but if you're after something a little different, Silent Service is well worth looking at.



BY: ULTRA
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 4
RESPONSIVENESS: NOT BAD

1-2 PLAYERS





PRESENTATION 81%
Attractive intro screens and option displays

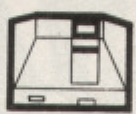
GRAPHICS 78%
A bright and colourful game but the graphics are sometimes a little blocky.

SOUND 76%
Plenty of atmospheric effects.

PLAYABILITY 82%
Manages to create a tense atmosphere during combat sequences.

LASTABILITY 86%
It's hard to imagine "finishing" this game, and it's one you'll come back to for a break from the more usual Nintendo fare.

OVERALL 82%
Although it lack the immediate action of other games, Silent Service is an enjoyable and interesting sub-simulation.



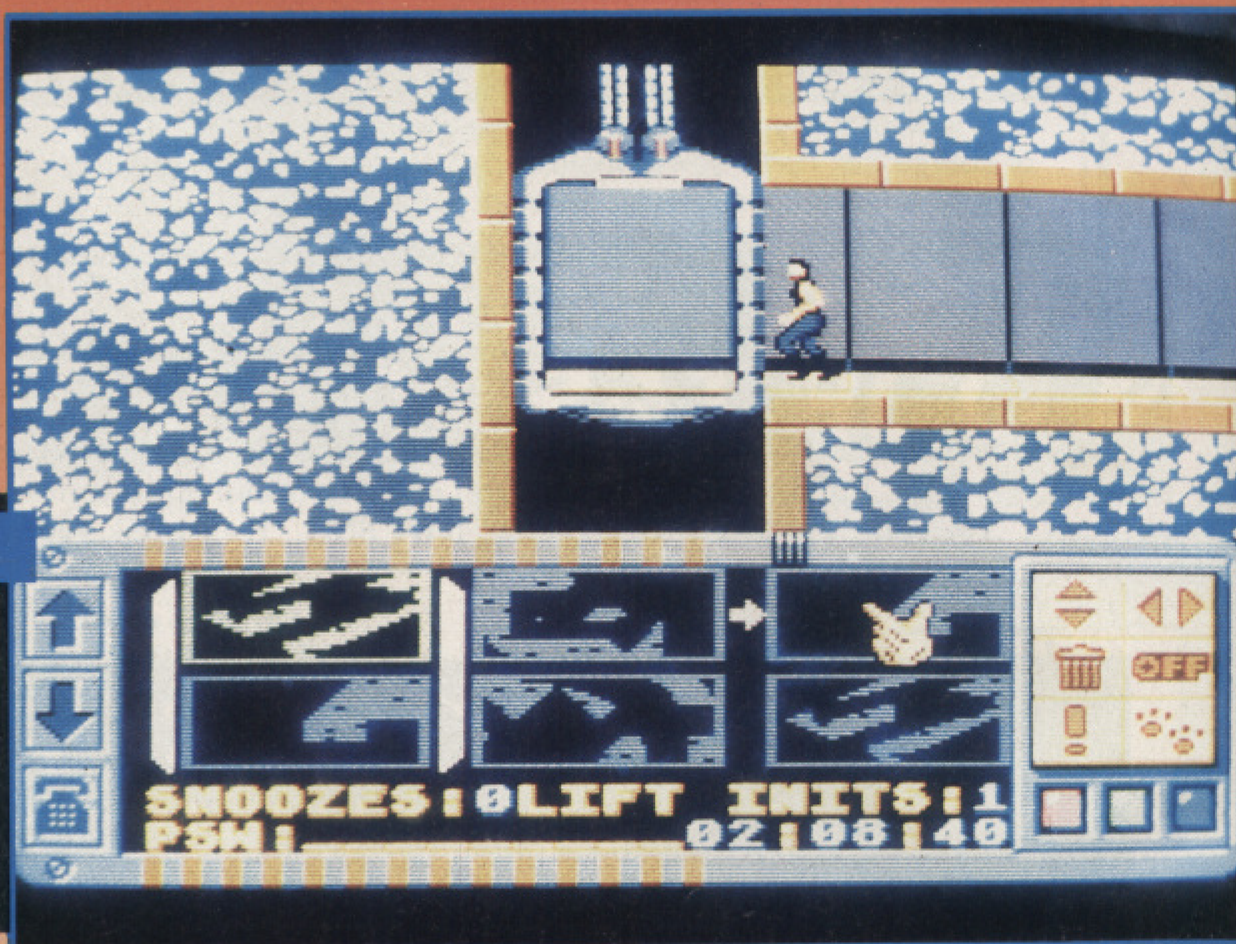
IMPOSSI MISSI

The evil Professor Elvin Atombender has hacked into defence computers around the world and unless he's paid an enormous ransom within 12 hours will launch all nuclear missiles and obliterate humankind. Sounds like it's time to call Special Agent 4125 to sort out the situation. But remember - the clock is ticking...

The world-saving mission involves penetrating Atombender's 32-room underground bunker and tracking him down before he destroys the world. Simple? No chance - the place is riddled with robot defence systems who are alerted to Agent 4125's presence and are out for his blood. If 4125 touches a robot, or is caught by the electric bolts they fire, he's stunned and ten minutes is knocked off the timer.

Atombender is locked behind steel doors in one of the rooms, and to enter 4125 must find and assemble a secret codeword from a microfilm. Evil villain that he is, Atombender has shredded the microfilm into 32 pieces and hidden them all over the bunker, so 4125 has to search all the furnishings in the place to find the pieces of film.

Once all the pieces of film have been collected, 4125 has to assemble them together to obtain the password - and then he can open the door and give Atombender a good kicking.

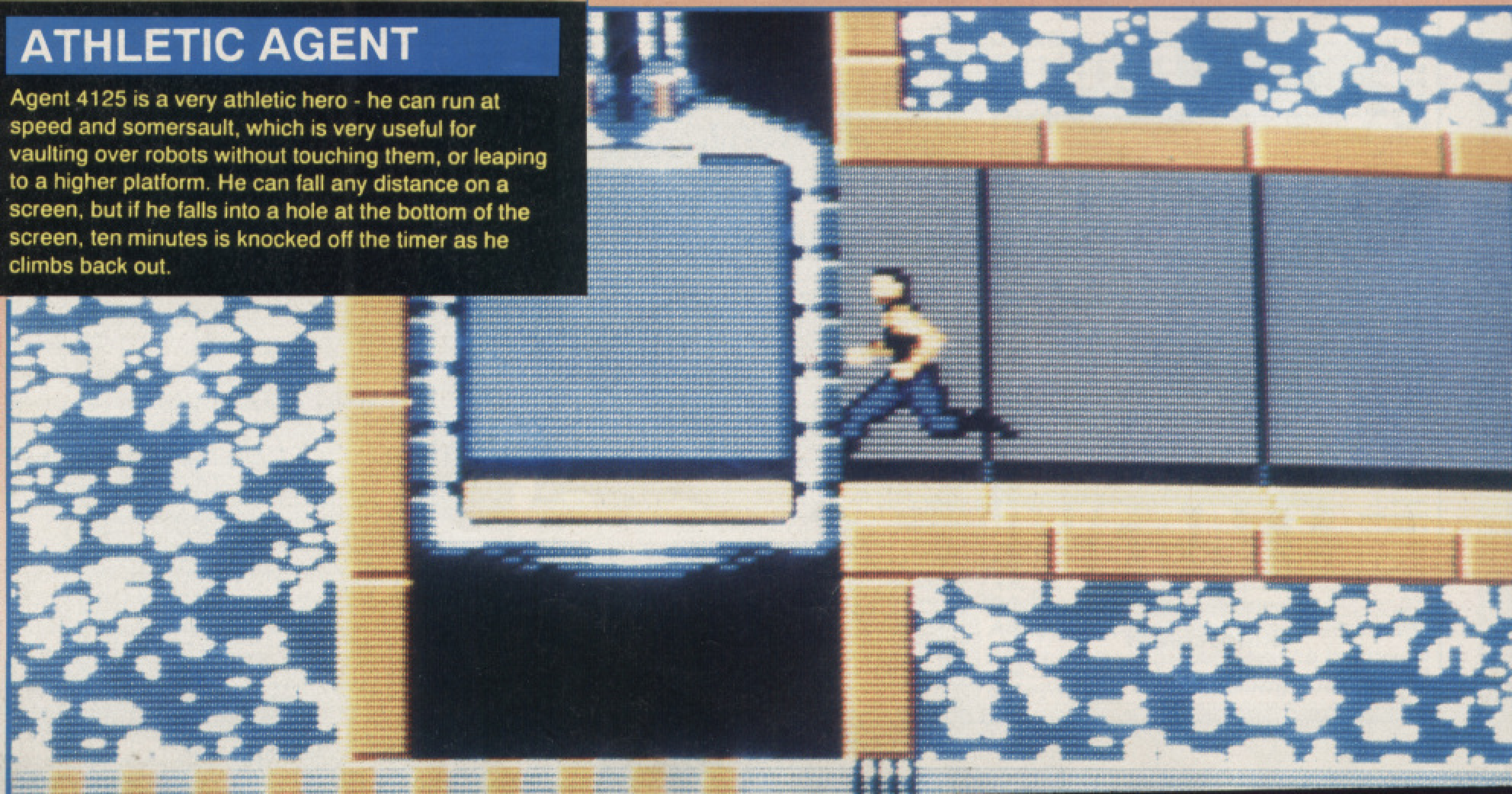


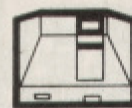
MICROFILM ASSEMBLY

Once all the film pieces have been collected, 4125 has to assemble them to form an 8-letter password. Each letter is obtained by overlaying four matching microfilm pieces to make a solid rectangle. This is tricky since the pieces are all jumbled when they're collected, and have to be rotated to fit together! It takes quite some time to solve the puzzle - so make sure you leave yourself enough time to do it AND get to Atombender's lair!

ATHLETIC AGENT

Agent 4125 is a very athletic hero - he can run at speed and somersault, which is very useful for vaulting over robots without touching them, or leaping to a higher platform. He can fall any distance on a screen, but if he falls into a hole at the bottom of the screen, ten minutes is knocked off the timer as he climbs back out.





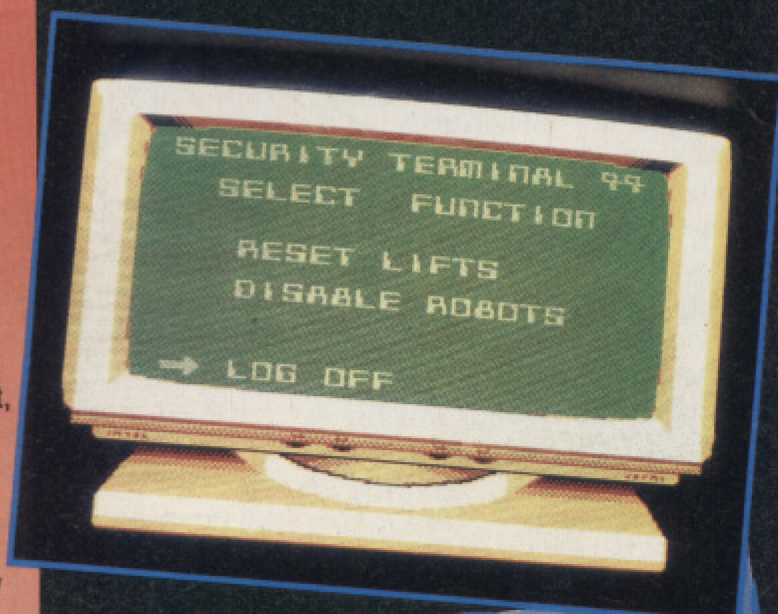
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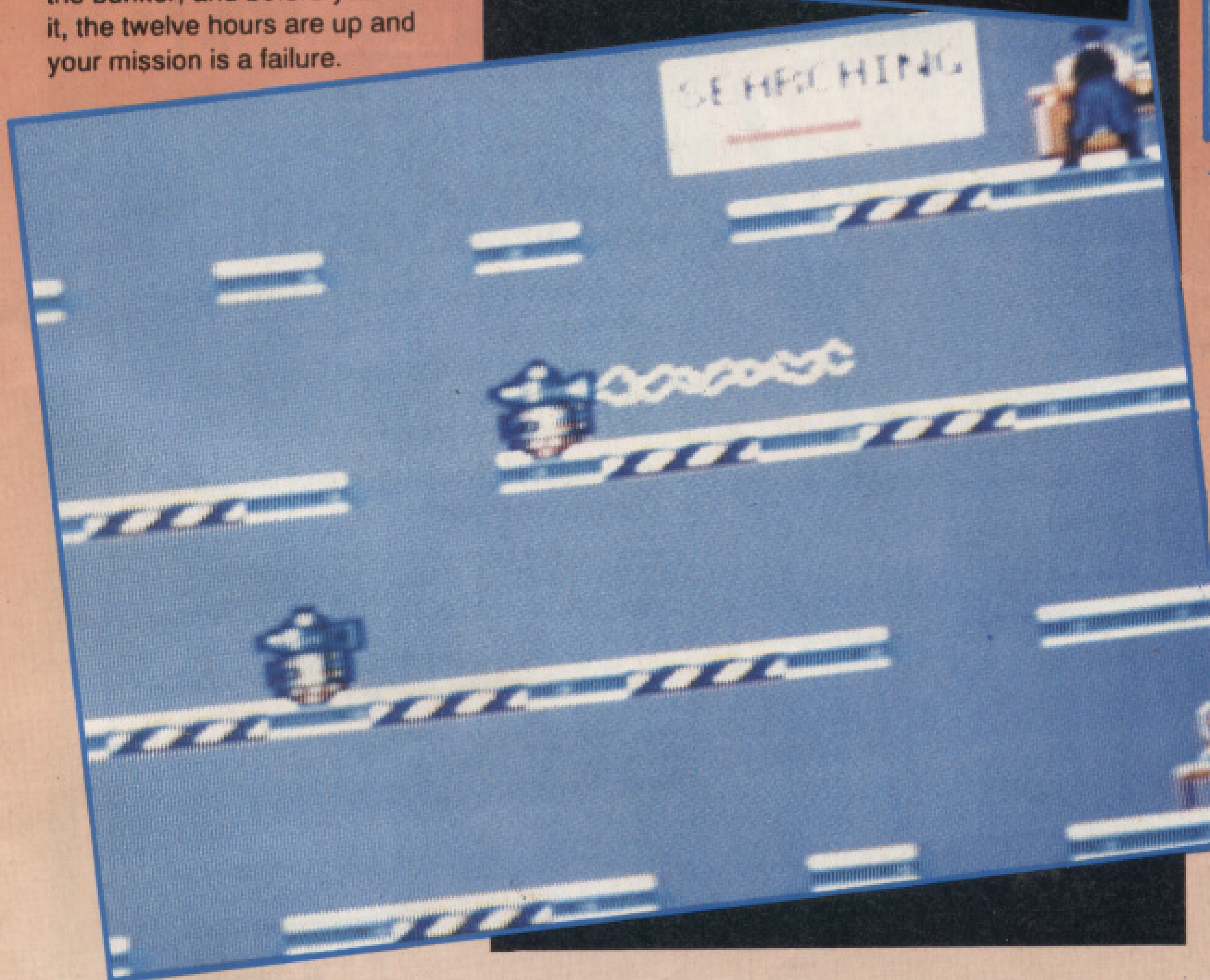
TIMER TROUBLES

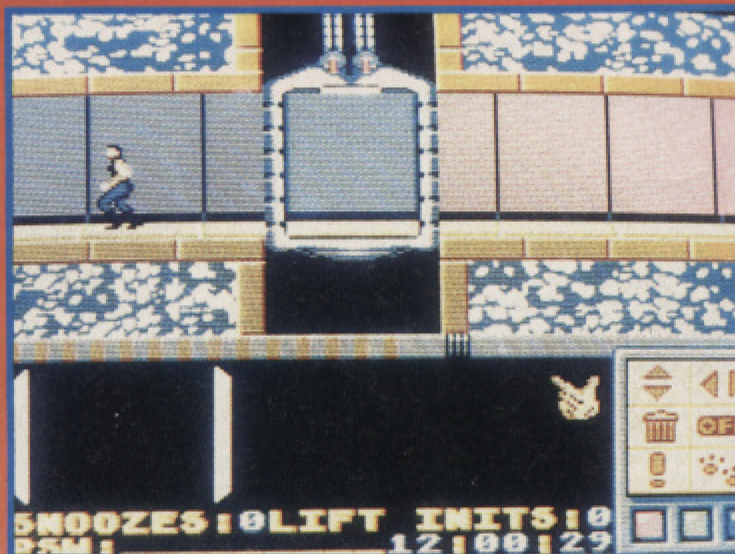
Every time 4125 is touched by a robot, or gets hit by a electric bolt, ten minutes is knocked off the timer. This might not sound like much at first - but those minutes quickly mount up as you explore the bunker, and before you know it, the twelve hours are up and your mission is a failure.

LOG ON

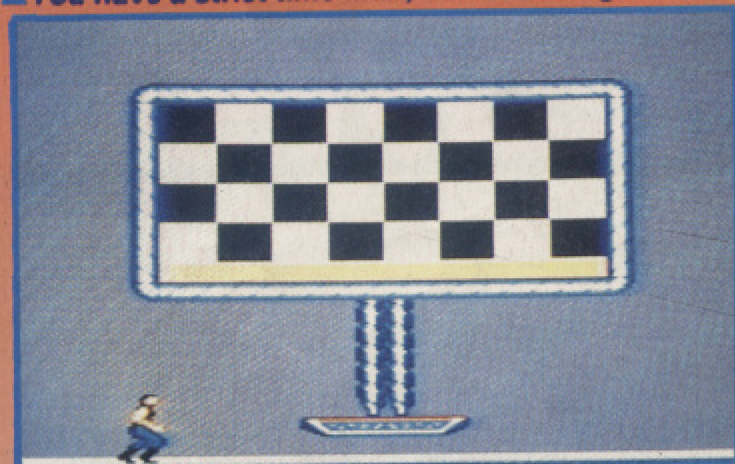
As well as finding microfilm pieces, there are also robot snooze and lift reset pass cards. The snooze disables all the robots for a limited period of time, and the lift resets return all lifts in the room to their original position - useful if you've got yourself stranded on a high platform. To get them to work you have to log onto one of the computer terminals that are found in each room, and enter the snooze or lift reset pass cards. Easy, eh?







▲You have a strict time limit, so don't hang around!



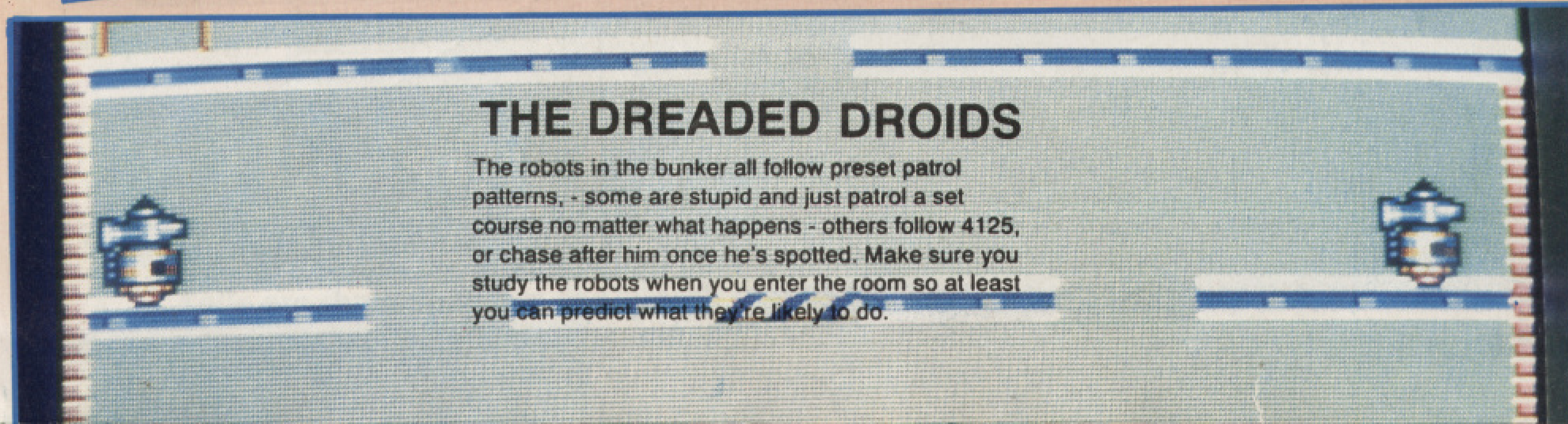
▲ The music memory game - win it for extra robot snoozes.

COMMENT



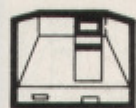
JULIAN

Impossible Mission is one of my all-time favourite games - its excellent graphics (check out the amazing animation on Agent 4125 and the robots) and superb sound effects (including sampled speech!) gives it a fabulous atmosphere. The gameplay is simply brilliant, testing your reflexes to their utmost as you leap and run around trying to avoid the robots, then requiring brain power to piece together the microfilm. It's certainly a tough game, but even if you do complete it, because the game is different every time you play it, you can keep on coming back for more. If you want to play one of the best games available for the Sega, look no further than Impossible Mission.



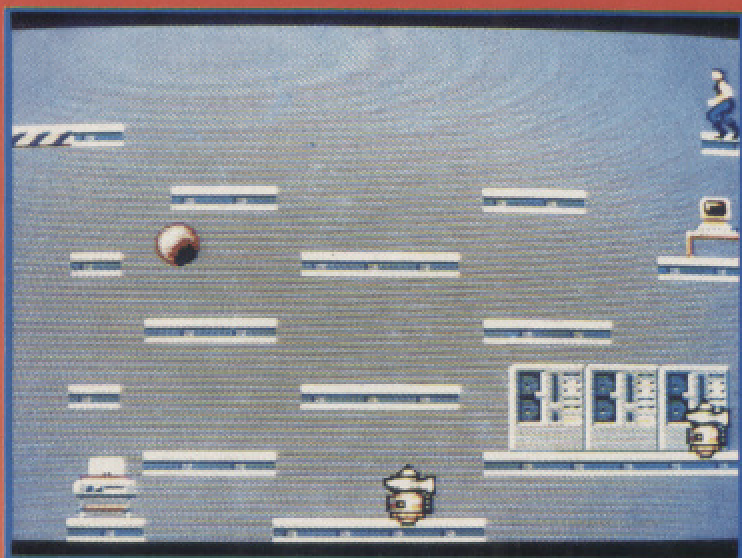
THE DREADED DROIDS

The robots in the bunker all follow preset patrol patterns, - some are stupid and just patrol a set course no matter what happens - others follow 4125, or chase after him once he's spotted. Make sure you study the robots when you enter the room so at least you can predict what they're likely to do.



REVIEW

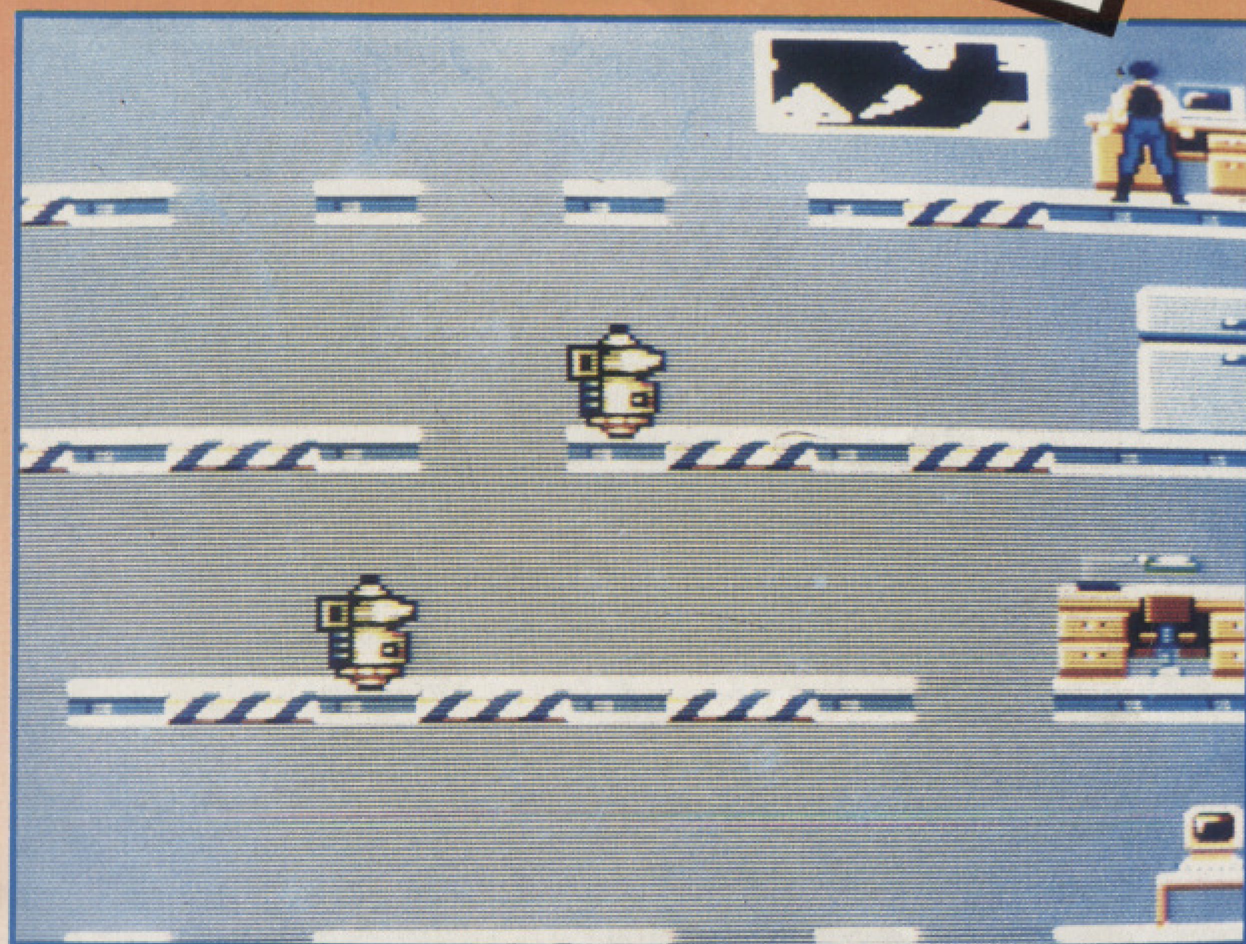
▼ *Evil Elvin Atombender has a strange sense of interior design - well, he is mad after all!*



▼ *Log onto the terminal below and activate a robot snooze!*



▼ *The banded sections are lifts, usually guarded by robots.*



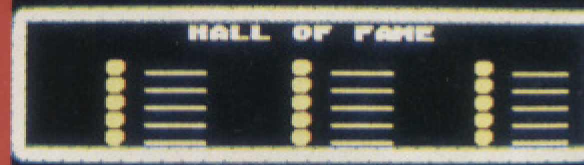
COMMENT



MATT

Impossible Mission is one of the best games to date on the Sega. The graphics are bright, robust and colourful, and extremely well animated - 4125 runs, leaps and somersaults like an Olympic champion. The sound fits the bill perfectly, with buzzing robots, Atombender's taunts and the nerve-shattering scream as 4125 plummets to his doom. Overall, IM has just the right mixture of arcade action and puzzle-solving elements to ensure that once you start, you won't put it down until you've completed it. An essential purchase, and recommended without hesitation.



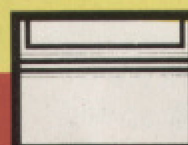


BY: US GOLD

PRICE: £29.99

RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MED/HARD
LIVES: TIMER
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT







PRESENTATION 83%

Superb on-screen presentation, but no options.

GRAPHICS 91%

Atmospheric backdrops and superbly animated sprites.

SOUND 89%

Sampled speech and great spot effects.

PLAYABILITY 97%

Incredibly addictive from the word go!

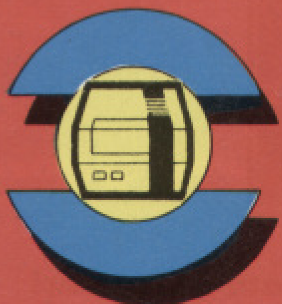
LASTABILITY 92%

Since it's different each time you play the challenge is always fresh.

OVERALL 94%

An utterly superb game that simply oozes class. Don't miss it under any circumstances.

MEGA MAN II





Megaman returns to save us all again! The evil Dr Wily has unleashed eight robots on an unsuspecting world, so your mentor, Dr Light, sends you to defeat them in their hideouts.

Each level is selectable at the beginning of a game, allowing you to start at a harder level if you wish. Your opponents include Metalman, Bubbleman, Airman, and Quickman: each has their own set of guardians to defeat as well as their own special form of attack. Our hero can leap and shoot his way through the screens to get to the enemy robot who is found at the end of each level.

After defeating each end-of-level baddie Megaman can then utilise its weapon to his own advantage, and at certain points Dr Light bestows bonus gifts upon you. The trick is knowing when to use the options available to you - Quickman's boomerangs can come in handy against difficult-to-shift creatures, but Woodman's leafshield is fairly useless against a tough attack.

The eight-way scrolling screen combined with great graphics and a tough but fun challenge make this a game to watch out for - we'll be reviewing it in full soon!



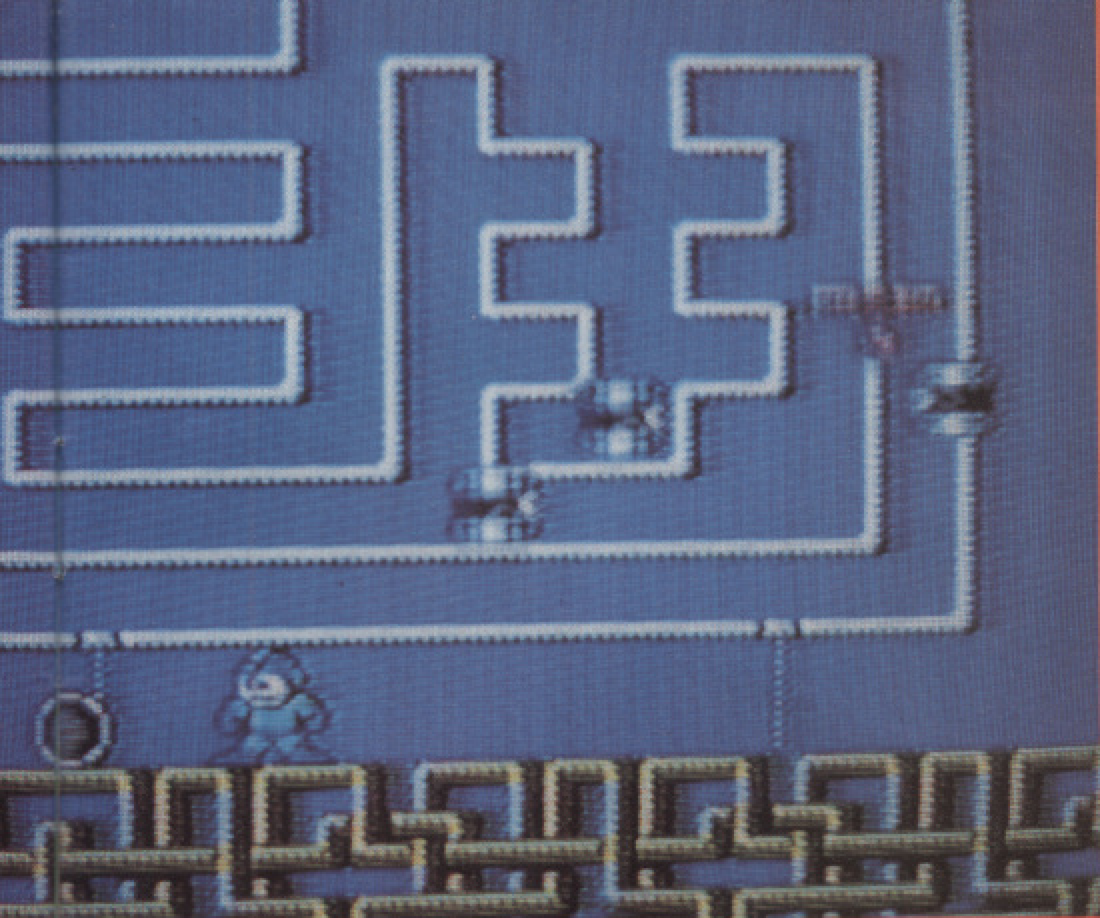
DON'T POINT THAT THING AT ME

The spiffy weapons to be collected add a great deal to the game. They can be selected at any point (once you've collected them) and used to devastating effect in the right place. They are colour coded to help the stupid, so there's no excuse for not shouting, "Eat bubble-lead death, matey!"

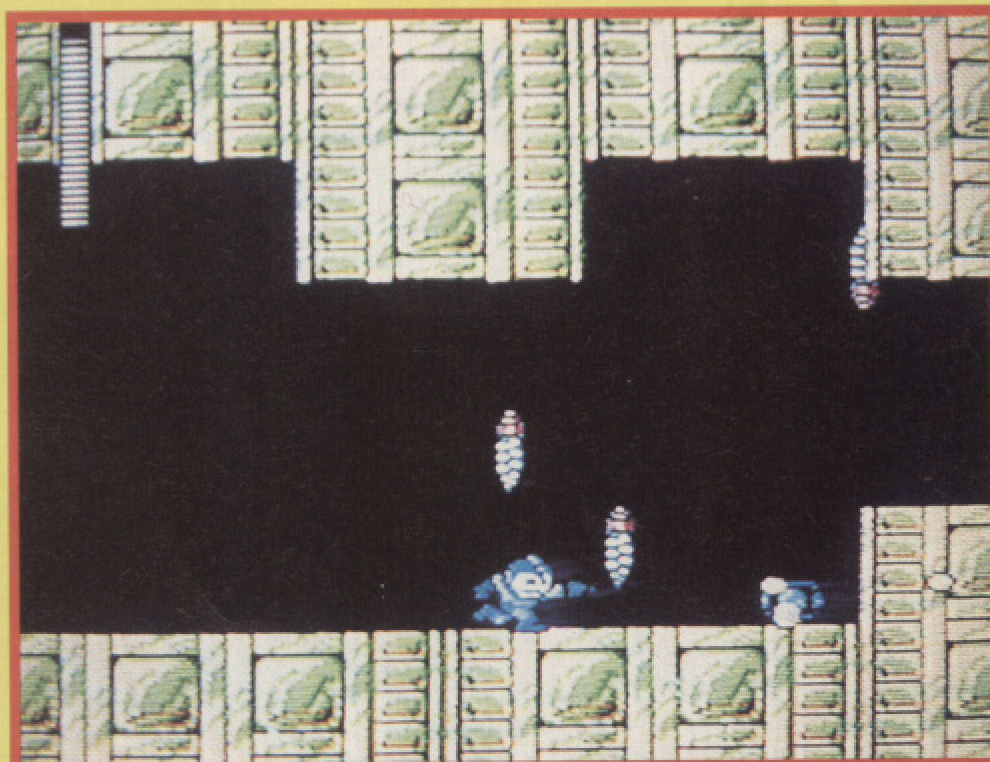


TAKE YOUR PICK

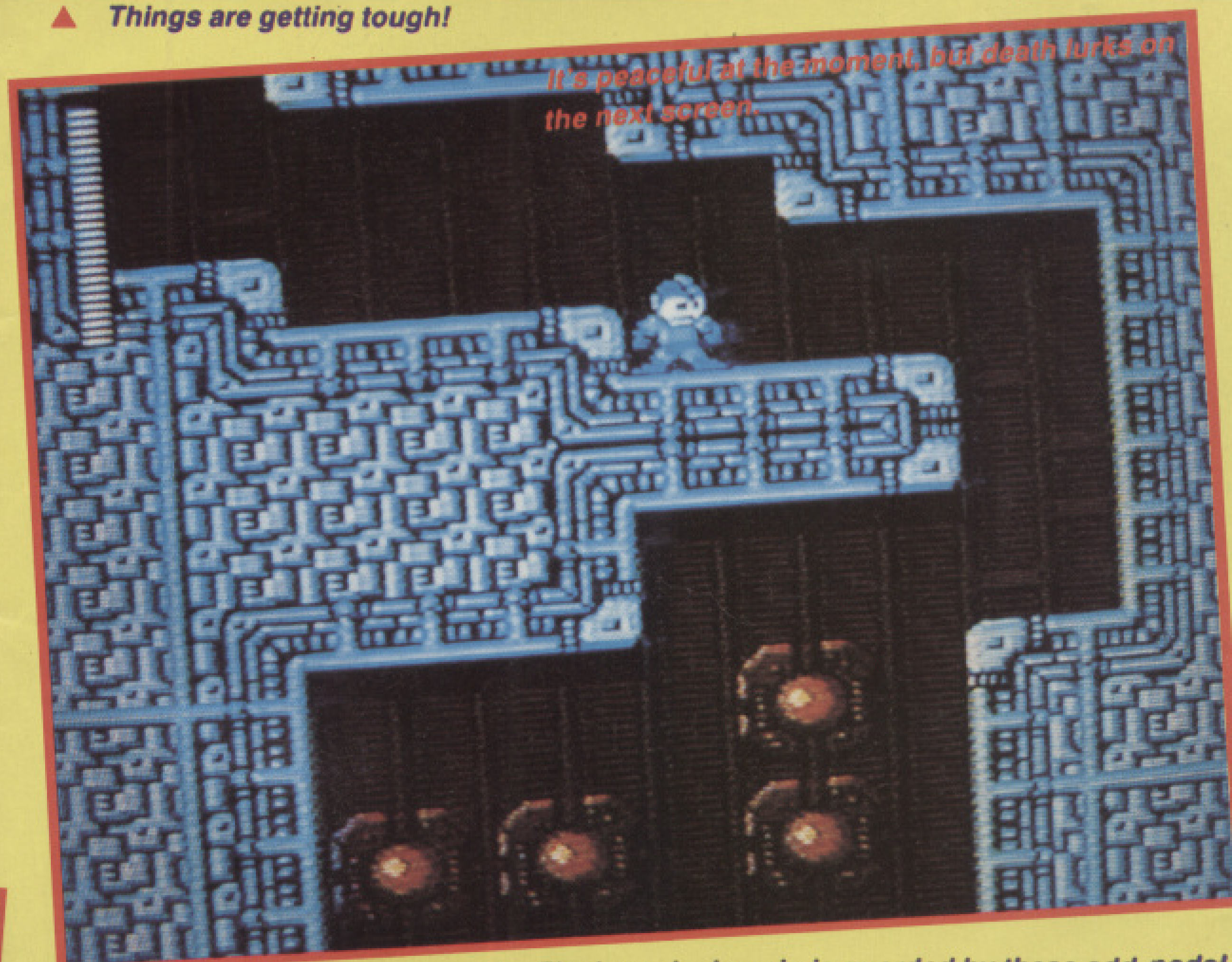
The selection screen lets you tackle any baddie you like. Bubbleman is the easiest, followed by Airman and the rest of the baddies in a clockwise direction. Choose your foe, press the start button, and get shooting. But be careful not to get too cocky - later levels are tricky!



▲ *Things are getting tough!*



▲ *Pick up the token for more energy.*

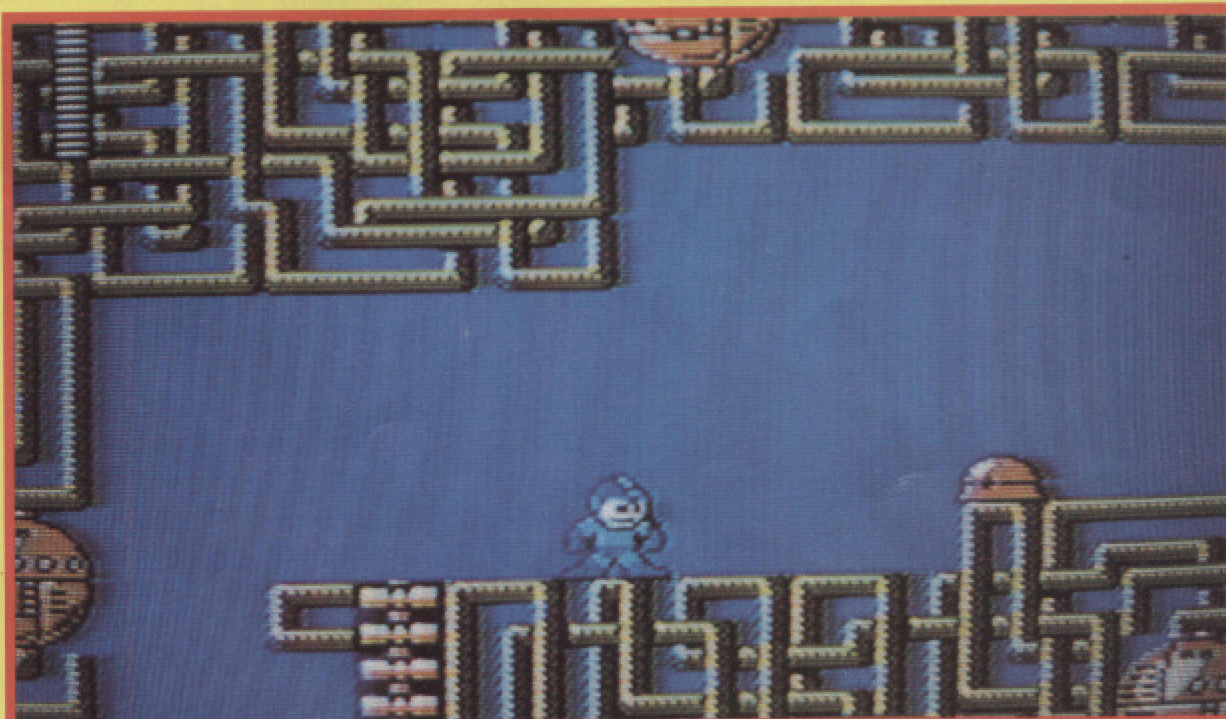


It's peaceful at the moment, but death lurks on the next screen.



▲ *The beginning of Airman's level.*

▼ *Flashman's domain is guarded by these odd pods!*



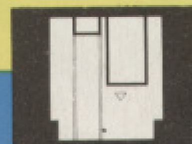


BY: NINTENDO

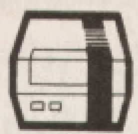
PRICE: TBA

RELEASE DATE: JAN '91
GAME DIFFICULTY: MED/HARD
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY FAST









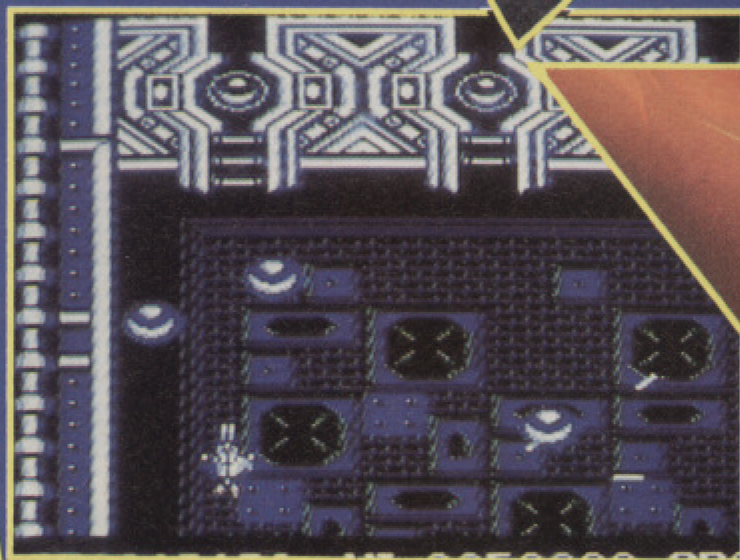
LIFE FORCE

The scourge of the spaceways, the giant lizard Zelos, has devoured the twin worlds of Gradius and Latis. The only chance of escaping Zelo's stomach lies in the shape of two super starfighters, the Gradius Industries Vic Viper, and Latis's RoadBritish Space Destroyer - armed to the teeth with the very latest in military technology. Who're the dumb schmucks who get to fly 'em? Guess who...

So sets the scene for Life Force, or Salamander as it's better known in the UK. This one or two-player intergalactic blaster sprung into our arcades in mid-1986, as the sequel to the smash coin-op Nemesis (or Gradius on the NES).

Life Force is both a horizontally and vertically scrolling shoot 'em up, featuring bundles of bolt on weapons, alien bad guys, big end-of-level beasts and lots of huge explosions. The object? Just get out there and blow 'em to oblivion!



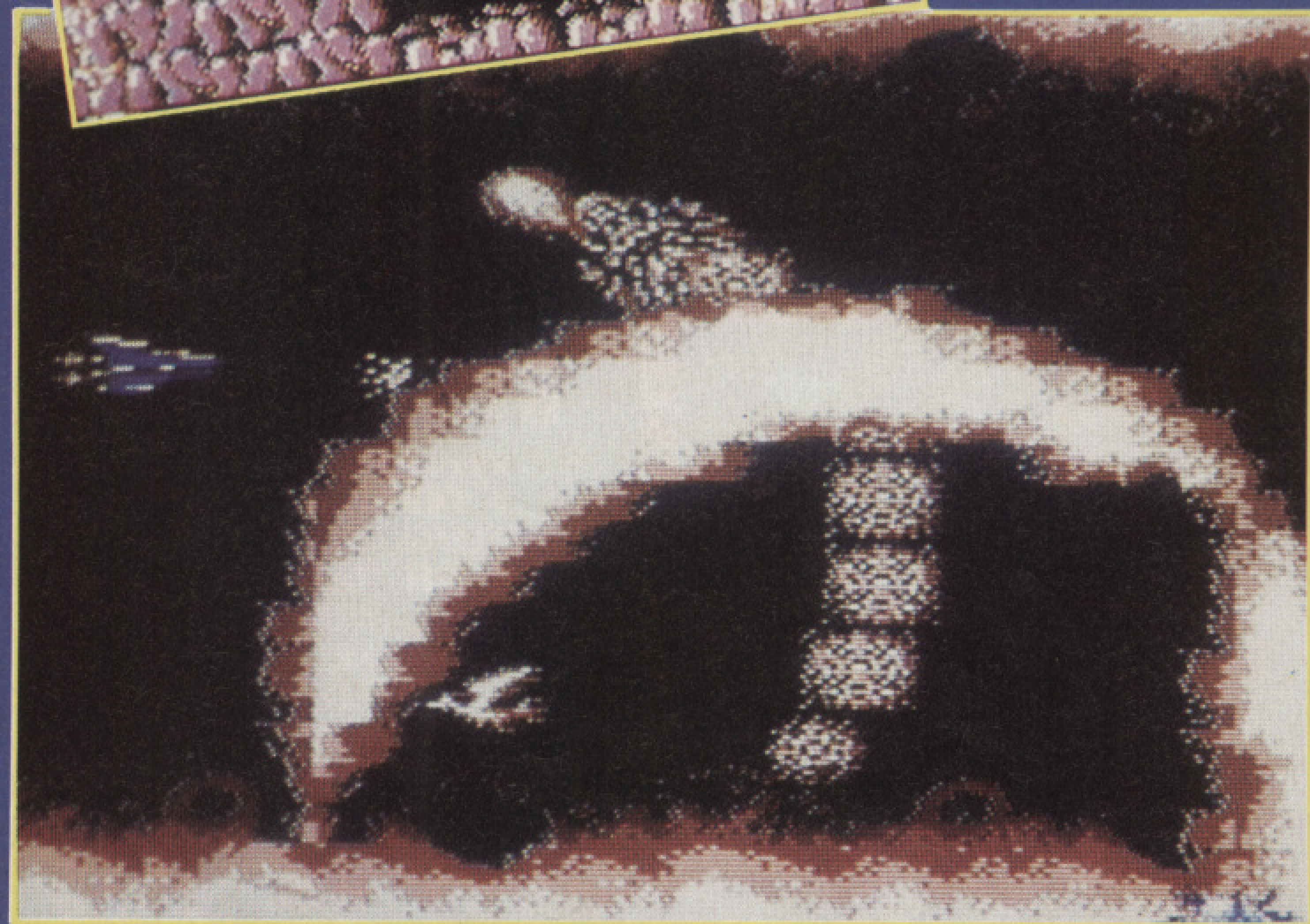


▲ Negotiating the spacecraft!

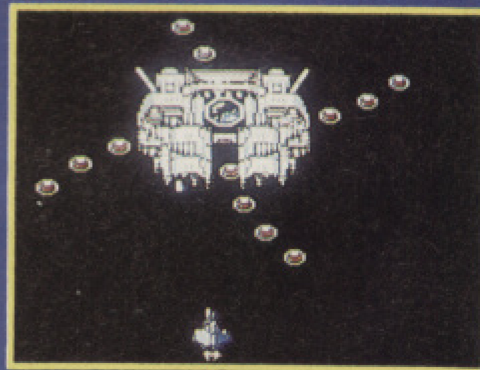
A steady hand gets you ▶ through this part.



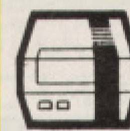
▼ Getting a little on the warm side!



▼ Accuracy is better than blind firing.







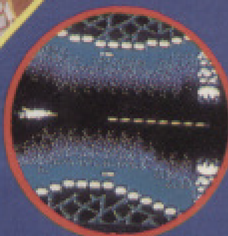
FEEL THE FORCE

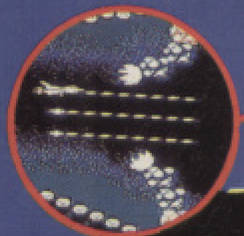
Life Force was one of a series of three coin-ops that appeared between 1985 and 1988. The first, Nemesis (or Gradius as it's known to NES owners), was one of the first shoot 'em ups to include enhanced weapons, multiple shot power and giant end-of-level guardians. A year later, Salamander appeared, and in 1988 Konami released Vulcan Venture, which is soon to be released on the NES under the title of Gradius II. Vulcan Venture featured full 8-way scrolling, and a choice of craft and weapons. Some of the aliens had to be seen to be believed, with massive fiery phoenix-like creatures, and some hideously gut-wrenching aliens!











THE POWERS THAT BE

TRANSDRIVE "SPEEDUP" BOOSTER: Increases both speed and maneuverability of your ship. Recommended.

GRADCORP FORCE SHIELD: This protective energy field envelops your ship, protecting it for a short while from collision with enemy missiles and vessels.

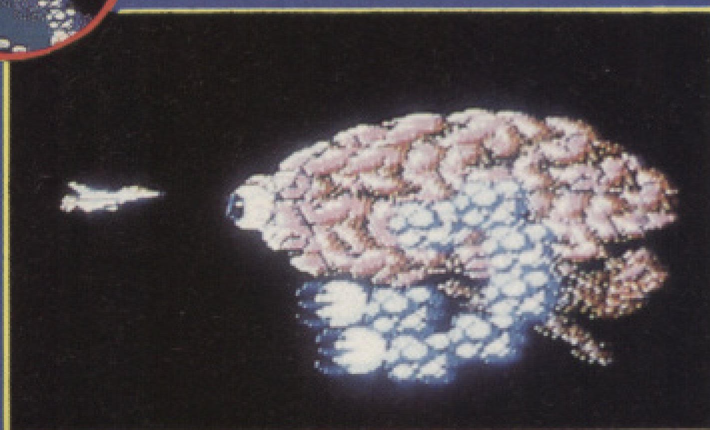
CP-26 "RIPPLE" LASER: Hoop laser, which progressively gets larger the further it is from the ship. Reasonable for medium-field destruction, but not too fast.

FAFSSM-17 DESTRUCTO MISSILE: These fire and forget projectiles blast from above and below the ship in tandem, and are multiplied twofold with each "multiple".

TX-3 MACROLASER CANNON: This is your basic weapon. Single shot, pretty ineffective.

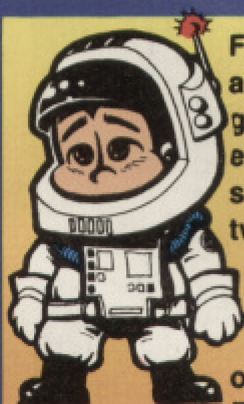
LCX MARK V PLUTONIC LASER: This baby slices through steel plating like a hot knife through butter. Probably the most effective weapon available.

RB-9 "MULTIPLE" OPTION: A glowing sphere which tracks the movement of your ship, automatically equipped with the same on-board weapons.



The first boss - brainy, eh?

COMMENT



JULIAN

Featuring amazing graphics, great extra weapons, simultaneous two-player action and a huge variety of aliens to blast into oblivion, Life Force is a blaster and a half! The way it switches between horizontally and vertically scrolling landscapes adds extra variety to the gameplay, and the different strategies required to beat the mean end-of-level guardians makes this both challenging and addictive. Life Force is by far the best shoot 'em up currently available on the Nintendo - if you're into games of this type you'd be silly to miss it.

COMMENT



MATT

Salamander may be getting on a bit now, but it still ranks pretty highly as one of the better shoot 'em ups. So I was extremely pleased to see that Life Force retains almost all of the major ingredients that made its arcade parent so enjoyable. The graphics and sound are as close as one could hope for, and the playability is just about right - not too easy, nor over-impossible. Some of the later levels are a bit complex, but practice makes perfect, as they say. If you're a fan of the coin-op, or just love a good blast, don't miss it.

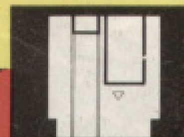
LIFE FORCE

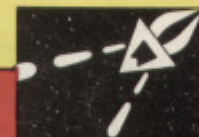
BY: KONAMI

PRICE: £29.99

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD

1-2 PLAYERS





PRESENTATION 79%
One or two-player option and great screen layout.

GRAPHICS 86%
Detailed and colourful sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 83%
Very similar tunes and effects to the arcade version.

PLAYABILITY 85%
A bit difficult at first, but it's good, clean alien blasting all the way - and dead addictive too!

LASTABILITY 88%
Six levels of frantic action and the two-player option ensure a long-lasting challenge.

OVERALL 86%
A stunning shoot 'em up which is a must for your collection.

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TIPS

SUPER MARIO BROS

To continue from where you left off, press START while holding down A.

WRECKING CREW

If you get the golden hammer, jump in the air by pushing the A and B button rapidly and push your man in the direction you want him to go.

LIFE FORCE

Press up twice, then down twice, then left, right, left, right, button B, button A, then Start button from the title screen to gain 30 lives. Thanks to M. Ritchie of Fife for that.

COBRA TRIANGLE

Collect 3 speedups, 3 missiles, 2 fires, and 1 turbo then allow the time to run out. Provided you collect the "1-up" you will not lose a life. Courtesy of Lee Cooper of Grimsby.

GUN SMOKE

On the title screen press A four times, SELECT four times, RIGHT twice then START to receive a machine gun with 300 bullets!

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT

To fight in "Another World Circuit" type in the code 135 792 4680, hold down SELECT then press buttons A and B simultaneously.

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

To get to the higher stages without having to fight your way through the lower ones, hold down RIGHT and press B three times on the title screen. Then press UP and B three times, press LEFT and B three times, and press DOWN and B three times. Then press START and use A and B to select a stage.

KUNG-FU

When walking along on levels three, four and five always do low kicks because it's probable that a few tom-toms will be following the grapplers.

To kill the Level One boss: wait for him to stand up and do two low kicks so he steps back, then move forward and follow the same procedure.

LEVEL TWO BOSS

Wait until he has thrown his boomerang, run up to him and do a flying kick, then follow it up with a few low kicks.

LEVEL THREE BOSS

Wait until he has kicked, then run up to him and rapidly do low kicks.

LEVEL FOUR BOSS

Wait until he has thrown a bomb then walk up to him and do low punches to his chest. Once half his energy has gone he will reincarnate; move back and wait until he has thrown the bomb, then do low punches to his chest.

LEVEL FIVE BOSS

Let him make the first move, then just do what you feel is a good move.



MEGA MAN

FIRE MAN

Jump when the flame tongues are descending to get past. The same tactic should be used to get past the sheets of flame. To kill Fire Man himself, just keep shooting, even when hit. Don't turn your back on him - you'll regret it!

ELEC MAN

Use a super weapon on the spines. The small ladder on the right of the screen leads to a big energy capsule. The Watchers must be shot right away, as their lightning is lethal; go to the right of the disappearing steps, and wait for the noise to just about finish, then jump. The magnet beam is gained by picking up the blocks and throwing them. Avoid Elec Man's shots - they're deadly - but it only takes three shots to kill him.

GUTS MAN

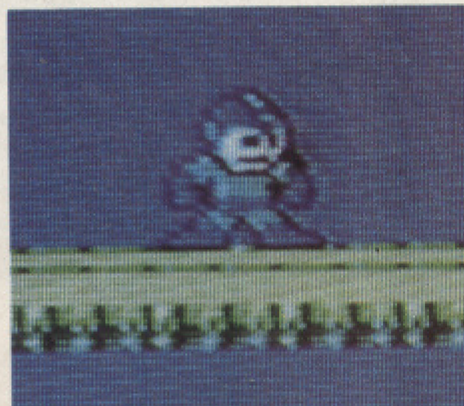
You need the magnet beam to make long steps to get to the right. Use bombs on the boss and jump when he lands, but otherwise he's easy to remove!

BOMB MAN

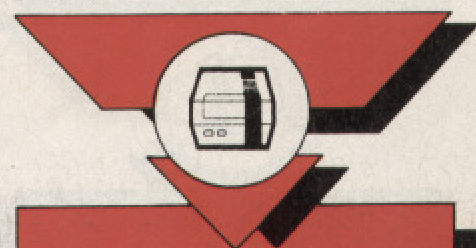
Don't pick up the little dots or you won't get anywhere. When the Bombombs start coming down, keep to the left on the ground. Sniper Joe can be killed with fire when he is jumping or shooting: the one in the niche gains you an extra life. When you reach the second Shell screen jump from the ladder platform immediately. The boss can be beaten simply by dodging and using loge range fire.

ICE MAN

Decapitate the Crazy Razys with your boomerang at the start. Use another weapon to get rid of the spines. Learn the patterns of the steps: the first is wait, jump, jump, wait, jump, jump; the second is j, j, j, w, j, w, j (up), j. Use the elecbeam on Ice Man in the same way as Fire Man.



A big welcome to the very first MEAN MACHINES tips section. We've got plenty of tips for Sega, Nintendo and Megadrive games - but we want more. And that's where you come in. If you've got some great tips, maps, cheats - or anything else that you think help or amuse other console gamesplayers, why not send them in to MEAN MACHINES? We've got a big prize of £150 worth of console software for the sender of the best tips of the month. So come on all you ace gamesplayers and share your tips with the rest of the console world. You never know, you could even end up with a big prize for your efforts!



NINTENDO



LEVEL ONE

Flying kick or repeatedly punch the cartwheel thugs. At the end of the street punch the Ninja Sisters off the ladder as they climb down. To defeat the guardian use repeated punches in one-player mode or, in two-player mode, flying kick the baddy while your partner is being strangled.

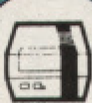


LEVEL TWO

When you reach the top of the building climb up the final pipe. The helicopter will come quickly - jump down and run to the right to avoid its bullets. Knock the baddies off the building to dispose of them quickly. When you reach the heliplane, backflipping enemies will appear. Use flying kicks to defeat them but avoid their knives.

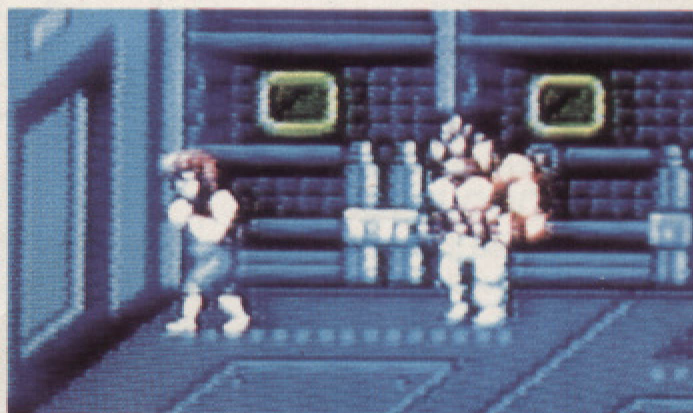
LEVEL THREE

Try to lure the Big Boss to the door. When it opens punch him. Do this twice.



LEVEL FOUR

Use six sidekicks on the first Big Boss, repeated punches on the second.



LEVEL FIVE

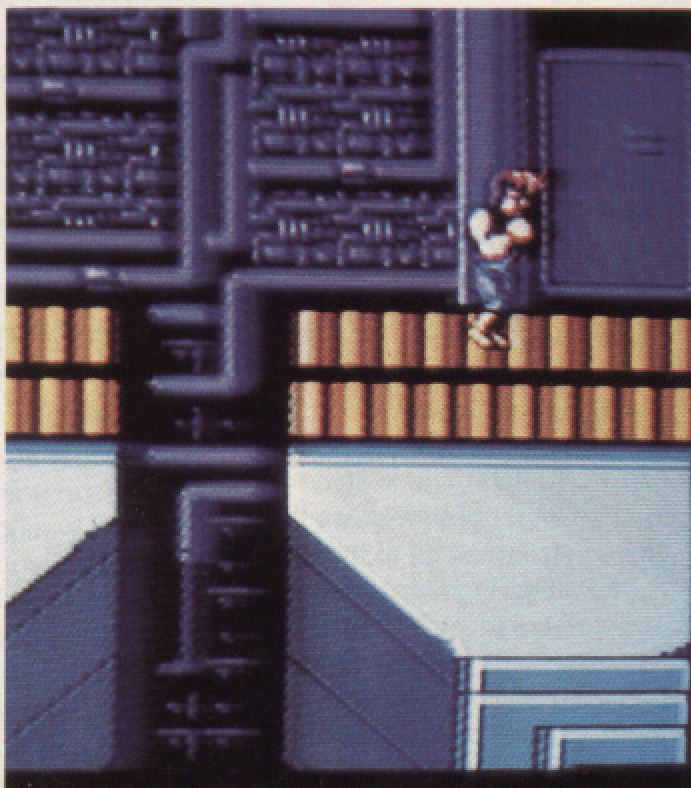
At the house, throw back the firebombs to dispose of the baddies and use the same technique on the Big Boss as in level four, keeping away from the edge of the cliff. When the somersaulters appear use flying kicks. When the sky water machine appears jump onto the platforms and get rid of the Boss by standing on a platform and punching when he jumps.

LEVEL SIX

Watch out for dripping torches. Wait until all platforms appear then jump through the window.

LEVEL SEVEN

When you pass the moving platforms go through the door. You will have to kill one thug and a guardian. Use the same technique as in level one but be careful as the floor disappears. Go through the door and jump over the cogs. Climb the ladder and jump onto the platforms to reach the door.



LEVEL EIGHT

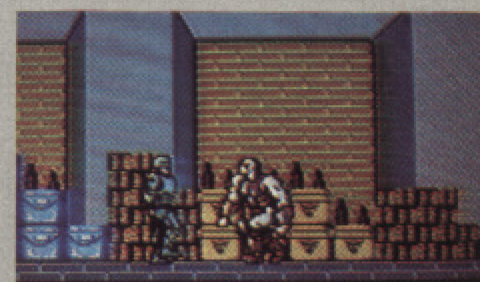
Dodge the Shadow's shuriken. When the King arrives, use a flying kick but watch his legs when your partner is being attacked; use a flying kick on them. If the King turns invisible keep jumping up into the air. When the screen flashes you have killed him.

GRADIUS

Pause the game and push UP, UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, to receive a near-full arsenal of weapons.

ROBOCOP

Once you have used your first three continues hold down buttons A and B, SELECT and START. You'll switch to the main title screen where selecting Continue will put you back to where you left off with infinite continues.



METROID

In order to defeat the mother brain you must stand in the platform where the final Zeebetite was and destroy it with over 30 missile shots. You must not move from this platform unless you have to dodge the Rinka (the Fire Rings). It's best to freeze them with the ice beam and do a runner.

RAD RACER

If you press the start button while holding down button A you can continue from where you left off. Press button A and Start together in order to continue at the same place when you die. Finally, when you crash hit the START button several times to slow down the rate at which time decreases.Cheers to Jody Goodall of Manchester for that.

RUSH 'N' ATTACK

In stages four and five, if you blow up a certain land mine a secret staircase will appear.

At the end of level two stay on the left hand side and the rocket men can't get you, but watch out for the knife men.

PUNCH OUT!!

Enter code 007 373 5963 and fight Tyson himself.

獣王記

ALTERED BEAST

Stuck on this free Megadrive game? Check out these tips, sit down, have a cigar - you'll go far. The spirit wolf always comes after the two brown wolves. If an ex-frog tries to suck your head off, run left or right then attack it. The quicker you transform, the quicker the end guardian arrives.



LEVEL ONE

This guardian is a demon surrounded by corpses, and he throws heads at you. Destroy him by firing with the A button, and when he throws heads, stop firing and dodge them by running left and right. Then start firing again - he takes about fifty shots.

LEVEL TWO

A plant-like creature which fires "Octeyes" at you. Fly straight at him so you are just touching the main eye, and before the pod opens to release the rest of them, use button B (the electric field). Keep pressing as fast as you can, because he's quickly destroyed.



LEVEL THREE

This is called a Mouldy Snail - a dragon in a snail's shell. Use button B and keep spinning into it.



LEVEL FOUR

The fatty crocodile. This is the hardest to destroy, as it fires small dragons and fireballs at you. As soon as it appears use button B to skim it at the top of the screen. Keep ducking and occasionally use button A when you have to avoid fireballs .



LEVEL FIVE

A large Hell Boar: it runs straight at you when the cloud has gone. Just keep using A and pulling down - it takes about 20 shots.

GOLDEN AXE

To select any level, press button B on the character select screen, push the controller down and to the left and hold down START. A small number will appear in the top left hand corner of the screen and, by using up and down on the controller you can select the level.







MEGADRIVE

AFTERBURNER

As many of you Afterburner pilots have noticed, you can get from levels 1 to 12 without getting hit by holding the joystick in a diagonal position (but keep firing off everything you've got and dock with the tanker for those hit-counts - you should be able to get an extra life by stage 12).

From stage 12 onwards, however, this method doesn't work. Instead, at the beginning of stage 12 climb as high as possible, and as soon as you see the first missiles launched towards you, dive as low as possible. You can out-fire and out-climb the missiles, which disappear off the top of the screen. Then stay down until the next lot of missiles appear and repeat as before - except climb hard. If a missile does manage to follow you, dodge it by going up or down, and then in the opposite direction as it gets close to you. You may find yourself going continually up and down, but it works!

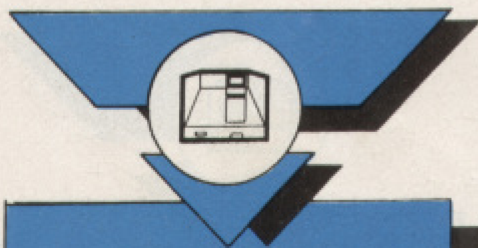
RAMBO III

Shoot the cavern roof above Sergeant Koloff to kill him!

MY HERO

When you come to fight the end of screen yob, only use kicks to the head and don't get trapped in the corner of the screen. Using the kicks to the head you will beat him faster; and the faster you beat him the more lives you collect.

When you fight Mohikan, use the punch or the high kick only, and afterwards you'll get an extra life as well as the one you get normally.



RAMPAGE

Whenever you can, pick up a woman from a window and just hold her. If you don't eat her your score will be boosted. Don't eat bombs or punch trains, as these drain your energy.

When jumping off a building, keep the up button depressed and you will climb the building nearest. When a tank fires shells at you, jump into them and you won't get knocked out.

R-TYPE

Before switching on the Sega, put both joypads in and hold control pad one diagonally down and right, hold control pad II up and left and hold down button I. Keep holding them all down and switch on the Sega, and keep everything pressed until the R-Type logo comes on screen. Now start a game and you'll be totally hard! At the end of level four you reach a screen packed from top to bottom with green dots. About half way through at the top of the screen is a gap in the landscape - fly up and go into it and you're transported to a bonus level!

On the continue screen (after the game over screen) a countdown starts. At this time, rotate the directional pad counter-clockwise until the countdown stops (it stops automatically). Release the directional pad and you enter the sound test. To change sounds, rotate the directional pad right to left and push button I. There are 17 sounds to listen to.

There are two continue modes. The first allows between 10 and 12 continues. When you have died three times and the continue screen appears, rotate the directional pad of control pad I clockwise quickly and you will receive between 10 to 12 continues depending on how quickly you rotate the pad.



ACTION FIGHTER

On the name entry section, type in SPECIAL to make you bullet proof and give you an extra three lives when the timer runs out.

Another useful tip is to get rid of the helicopter when driving the car: simply turn into a motorbike and back - it'll disappear.

POWER STRIKE

To begin the game with ten lives, push joystick DOWN, RIGHT, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, UP, RIGHT and button 1 twice.

RASTAN

For unlimited continues, switch on the machine and, when the Sega logo appears, hold down buttons 1 and 2 and push the control diagonally down-left.

QUARTET

Push PAUSE four times on the title screen and any button on joypad two for sound test.

WONDERBOY III

To instantly control all you alter egos, with loads of dosh and a complete armoury, type in WE5T ONE 0000 000 on the password screen.

GOLVELLIUS

For a really crazy cheat, try entering the following code:

QQQQ QQQQ QQQQ
QQQQ
QQQQ QQQQ QQQQ
QQQK

ALEX KIDD IN HIGH-TECH WORLD

Some of the clouds on the ninja section are yellow. Shooting them five times reveals a box worth 200 GP's.

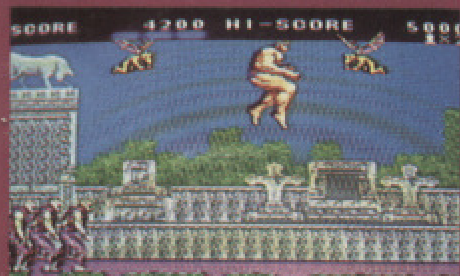
POSEIDON WARS

To continue a game, just push the joypad, down, down, down, down, right, right, right, up, up and left.

To access the sound test, push the joypad, up, left, left, down, down, down, right, right, right, and right.

ALTERED BEAST

To continue the second time press the lower left diagonal D-button and both buttons. To continue the third time press the lower right diagonal and both buttons. The fourth and final continue can be achieved by pressing the upper right diagonal and both buttons.



BLACK BELT

When you come to the opponent in the room with the picture here's how to beat him. Trap him in the corner of the screen and duck and punch him in the stomach. Once his power is used up comes the confusing part - how can a man with no power fight back? We don't know either, but after you complete the next move he won't be fighting back. When he jumps up and tries a flying kick to your head, copy him. If you make

contact he stops dead in mid-air - and then and only then can you beat the hell out of him.

This other cheat has been printed several times in different mags, but none seem to explain it properly. Press fire on the title screen to start the game. The usual red screen showing lives and levels should appear. When this screen flashes off for a second, press RESET before the game screen comes up. Things will go a bit messy, but sort themselves out later. Now you can have a whole load of kung-fu fun and frolics.

CAPTAIN SILVER

To utilise the continue option, push up and press both buttons at the same time. This works on all levels past the first one, and restarts the game at the start of each level.

CHOPLIFTER

On the second stage, fly behind the battle ship, fire and up comes Jaws!

On level 3, travel backwards past the lava pit.

Shoot the first enemy rocket base several times, and after a while Superman appears. The prisoners will now run twice as fast. Wheee!

ENDURO RACER

If you want to jump levels, on the title screen press RESET, then UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT on control pad I. You can now choose the round you want to play.

GHOSTHOUSE

Punch the light bulbs to freeze all the characters on screen. This works three times a level only.

ACTION FIGHTER

Try these passwords:

DOKI-PEN
HANG-ON
GP-WORLD

KENSEIDEN

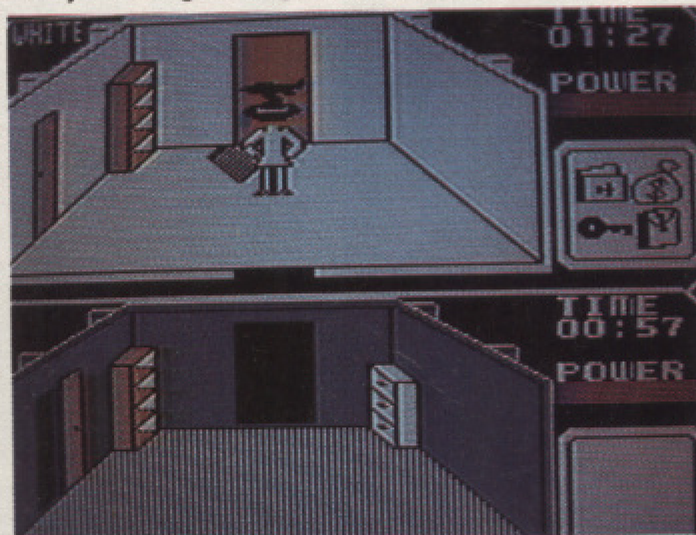
Climb big Buddha and push up for a secret screen!!!

If you want to access the round select feature, turn off the Sega, press and hold button I and II, then turn the system back on and continue to hold buttons I and II down until the title screen with the figure appears. Release buttons I and II and press the top left hand corner of the directional pad and button I. Round select followed by a number will appear. You can select the level with the directional pad and push either button I or II to start the game.

The game offers training sessions (rounds 5,6,8 etc). Use these sessions before you begin to battle the levels. If you are able to get through these training

SPY Vs SPY

When you are selecting difficulty and number of players, choose the option so that the airport room can be found from the start. Find the airport room and seal it off with traps and wait in an adjoining room. Wait for the opponent to find all the goodies, then when he tries to come through the door, he'll be killed and you can go and get the lot and head for the airport.



THUNDERBLADE

When approaching the end of level fortress, move up to either top corner and hover there. The fortress should now blow up without you touching it.

In the second half of stage one (the city) you can dodge the tanks' missiles by moving in an anti-clockwise square around the edge of the screen. As in Afterburner, however, keep firing for those valuable hit-counts!



TRANSBOT

When you reach the first city, three devices appear called Hiluns. If they're blasted with weapon system D, the mission will then continue on the underground level.

WONDERBOY

On title screen press button I, then press button I again twice, and then button II twice. Hold both buttons down at the same time, and press the D-Button up for a higher round.

In Wonderboy you need to collect a total of 36 dolls (one each round). On area nine, round four the doll is actually found in a fire. If you have all 36 dolls after killing the monster at the end of Area 9 you go onto round one (area 10). From now on you can't jump up levels or rounds - you can only go down!

FREE GAME

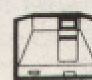
This is an oldie, but some new Sega owners might not be aware that there's a free game actually built into the machine. Turn on the machine while simultaneously pushing the control pad buttons and pushing upward - a maze game scrolls from the right and you can play away...

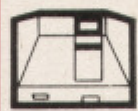
STUCK IN A GAME?

If you're stuck on a game and can't get any further, why not write to the MEAN MACHINES Tips Helpline? We'll be printing letters from gamesplayers who've got themselves stuck in a game and will try our best to get them out of their predicament. And if we can't help, perhaps one of you readers can?

If you're a game genius, perhaps you'd like to put your name forward for the Tips Helpline? Write to us at the address below and don't forget to state which games you know! Readers who are then stuck can write to you, and as long as they enclose a stamped addressed envelope, you can reply to them. So not only will you be helping other gamers - you could also make some new friends!

Letters should be sent to: TIPS HELPLINE, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. By the way, DO NOT not phone in with your problem - we do not give any help on the phone. Write in and you're guaranteed an answer. Okay?



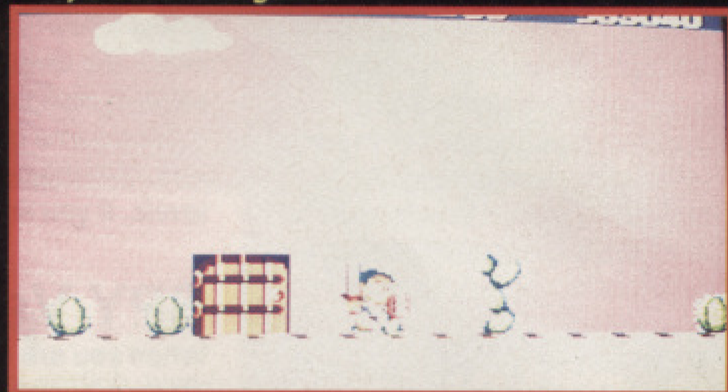




One of the underwater scenes. Grab the pearls for extra points.



▲ Wonderboy in his "normal" form - this is how you start the game.



▲ Each door leads to another subsection of the game. Check all of them carefully!

WONDERBOY III

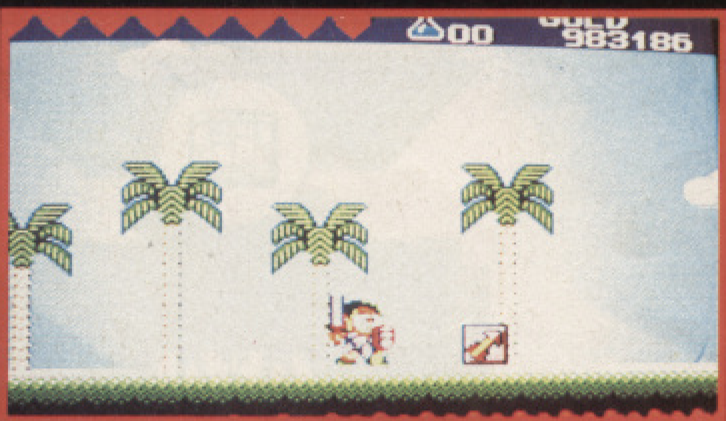
We join Wonderboy at the e[illegible] of an arduous journey - a journey full o[illegible]nge omens and immeasurable hardship. Our h[illegible]s just about to approach the lair of the evil dr[illegible] a vicious creatur[illegible] terrorising the realms of Mons[illegible]and Wonderboy is one step away [illegible] the Dragon a blow it'll never forget...

However, Wonderboy has no [illegible] this particular dragon's powers. We aren't [illegible] about a rather lethal case of bad breath either - th[illegible] Dragon has the ability to curse his assailants by causing them to mutate into Dragon Man - a human/dragon hybrid... Three guesses who his last victim happens to be!

Cursed, wretched and deformed, Wonderboy must begin a new quest - to find some way of reversing the Dragon's spell - a quest that will take him through many levels of platform infested multi-directional scrolling chaos...

▲ A case of severe halitosis.

▼ Grab the money and buy extra weapons!

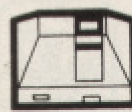


▲ Power-ups litter the landscape - collect the set!

MONEY! MONEY! MONEY!

Vanquished foes leave golden coins behind which can be used to buy better weaponry, armour and other useful items at the weapons shops dotted around the map. So when you're bashing the baddies, keep collecting the cash!





COMMENT



MATT

This has to rank as one of the greatest Master System games ever! It has a look and feel slightly reminiscent of the Nintendo Mario series (no bad thing) and a depth of gameplay second to none. What constantly amazes me about this game is that there's always something new to discover, be it a key to a previously locked door or even a secret room! Couple that to the sheer vastness of the quest and Wonderboy III's "classic" status is assured. All in all, a very slick Sega product with universal appeal. Make sure it's in your collection - NOW!



▲ *The shop. Buy power-ups and extra lives if you have the money - and if they're in stock!*

WONDERBOY - THE COIN-OP STAR

The original Wonderboy coin-op was a fairly good horizontally scrolling platform/shoot 'em up game, and was really an attempt by Sega to cash in on the Super Mario Brothers craze. It was an instant smash and two follow-ups appeared on the arcade scene. Wonderboy III on the Master System is different to all three coin-ops, but has taken its inspiration from them, combining the platforms and shooting of Wonderboy, the adventuring of Super Wonderboy and the cuteness of Wonderboy III in Monster lair to great effect!



▲ *Try not to get a bad dose of crabs.*

METAMORPHOSIS MAYHEM

At various points throughout the game, Wonderboy can transmute into different creatures - all of whom have varying degrees of skill in certain areas. Piranha Man has fine swimming abilities, Hawk Man can fly and Dragon Man can breathe fire and walk through lava. Mastering each character's strengths and weaknesses is the key to success.



COMMENT



JULIAN

This brilliant Sega game kept me up late for more than a few nights when I first got hold of it. The combination of adventuring, shooting and platform action results in one of the best games of its type available on any console. The graphics are simply superb - especially when the hero changes into one of his many guises - Dragon Man is my favourite, since you can roast everything in your path with your fiery breath. The game is huge and there's loads to discover - one of the reasons why it's so amazingly addictive. If you're a new Sega owner, or simply missed out when this was released, make sure you add this to your collection.

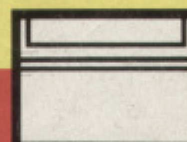


BY: SEGA

PRICE: £29.99

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT







PRESENTATION 93%

Very well presented on all levels, with password and continue options.

GRAPHICS 92%

Amazing sprites compliment the many-and-varied backdrops.

SOUND 77%

The usual Master System fare on this score - could have been much better.

PLAYABILITY 95%

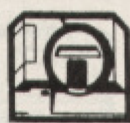
Incredibly accessible from the word go, with addiction setting in almost immediately.

LASTABILITY 96%

So much to see and do that you'll come back to this one for months and months.

OVERALL 95%

An outstanding golden oldie which deserves to be snapped up immediately!



REVIEW

One of the most evil beings in the entire Universe, Death Adder, has kidnapped the King and Princess of Yuria! And the dirty swine has also carried off the legendary Golden Axe! And to cap it all, he's killed some of your family. So grab your axe or sword and put on your fighting trousers, 'cos it's time for revenge!

Death Adder's gone and hidden himself in his great big castle, and between you and him is his army of horrid creatures. Goblins, skeletons, black knights, ogres, giant swordsmen and even dinosaur riders are all present to wear down your energy bar and stop you in your tracks!

Sounds pretty tough, eh? Well, fortunately there are a few useful options on the title screen to help make life easier. First of all you can select a character - either a Dwarf, Amazon or Barbarian. After that you can adjust how much energy your character has, from six units to a suicidal one unit. You can fiddle with the control method and pick one which suits you best. There are also practice options - but more of those later. And finally there's a two-player option for simultaneous baddie-bashing!



On the title screen you can choose your favourite character.



Between levels, the story of your progress is charted on a fantastic map.



Two dino riders, an orc and two
against stiff opposition.



The Amazon takes the 2.0 GTI Tu

RIDING THE DINOS

Knock a baddie off his dinosaur and you can climb aboard and use the dino to attack them! There are three makes of dinosaur - learn to recognise the best dinosaur models and grab them as soon as possible.



Dino 1.3 Popular: Just swings his tail and causes a bit of damage to a baddie.

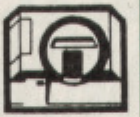


Dino 2.0 GTI Turbo: A turbocharged reptile which breathes fire everywhere and causes mega damage.



Dino 1.6 GL Ghia: Spits firebombs, which are quite jolly and cause a fair amount of damage.

GOLDE





vo lar e ogres! The Dwarf is certainly up



MAGIC THE BEINGS

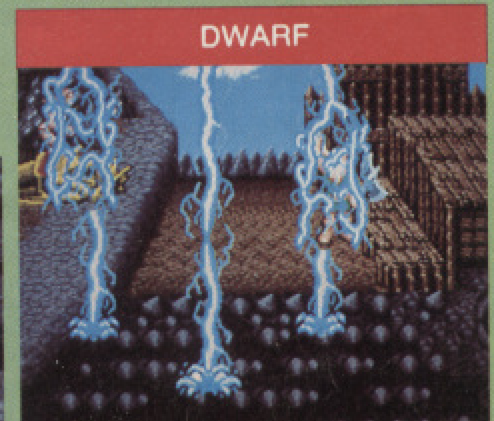
Each character is capable of using magic. Just pick up the potions that the annoying little blue pixies drop when you kick them up the ass, and then press the magic button for a mega death-dealin' mound of mayhem. The more bottles you collect, the more powerful the magic. A full load ejaculated all over the enemy usually kills it off.



BARBARIAN



DWARF



AMAZON







Turb dino for a quick spin.

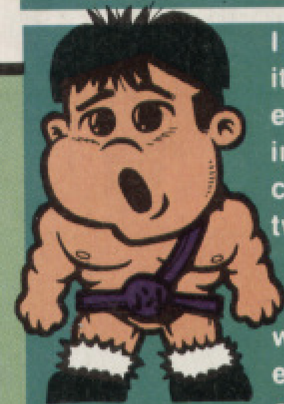


SWORDS AT DAWN

There are two practice options: The Duel and Beginner. The former is a one or two-player practice game which gives you the chance to fight all the foes on a one-on-one basis. You only get one life, and at the end you get a rating to show how good a fighter you are. Beginner is a mini version of the game where you have to depose Death Adder Jr. There are three levels to beat, and if you can complete them, you're ready for the real challenge.

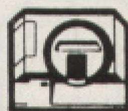


COMMENT



MATT

I love this game - it's got everything I want in an arcade conversion. The two-player option is the most fun - but watch out, it's easy to hurt the other guy (that can be fun too!). The Duel adds a whole new dimension that wasn't in the coin-op, and there are two new levels: this adds to my high opinion of the game. Nothing beats a great beat 'em up, and this is one of the best I've seen. It's easy to get in to, and the fun doesn't stop - although the opposition gets tougher all the time! You won't regret buying this excellent game. I'm just about to go back for just one more headbutt... and I'll still be there in an hour or two!



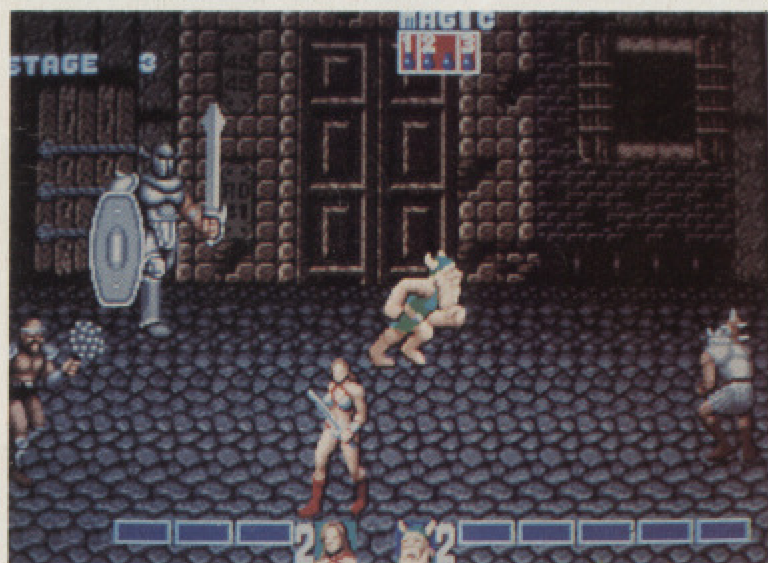
REVIEW

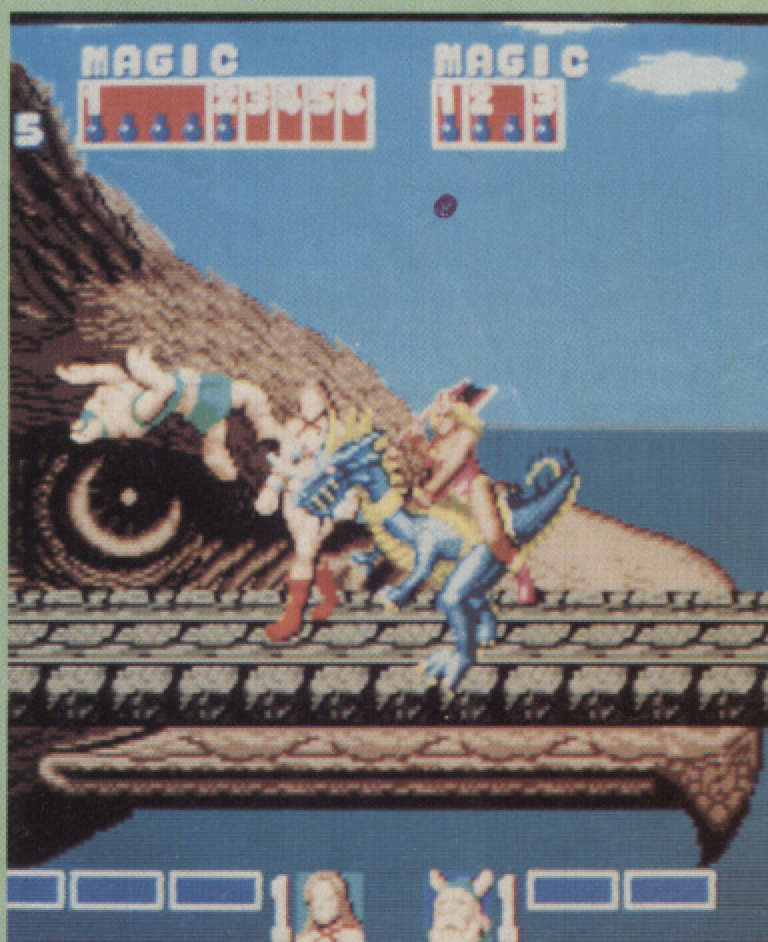
COMMENT



JULIAN

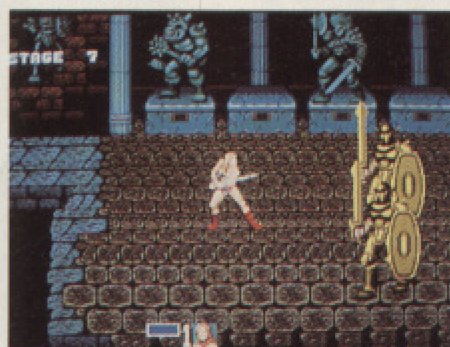
I like a good beat 'em up. But I love a brilliant one! And this is one such game. As soon as you stick this in the Megadrive you know it's a classy product. There are a wealth of options that let you change the game's parameters, and there are also two practice options which are mini-games in their own right! The game itself is an exact (and I mean exact) copy of the arcade original bar two things - there are a couple of extra levels added onto the end of the game! Some people say that console software is expensive. But when you're getting the equivalent of an arcade machine with extra levels AND two bonus games, £35 doesn't seem like a lot of money!





MOVIN' AND GROOVIN'

All three characters have a variety of moves. There's straightforward running, jumping and hacking with their weapon. Combinations of these moves, though, gives a shoulder charge, jumping downward slice and backward roll. Learn them all and you should be unbeatable.









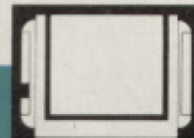






BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 2
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: SUPER

1-2 PLAYERS





PRESENTATION 90%
A fantastic array of options - this is how games should be.

GRAPHICS 91%
Breathtaking backgrounds and sprites - even the skeletons' jaws chatter!

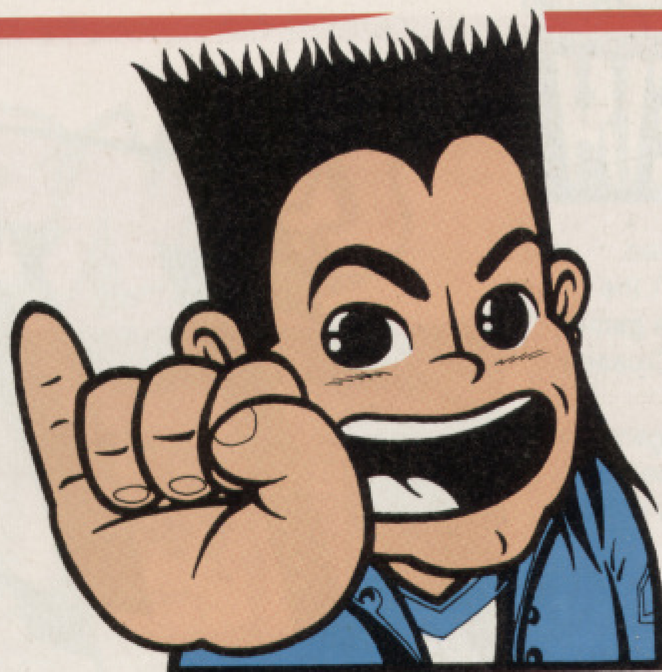
SOUND 85%
Great tunes and plenty of superb effects.

PLAYABILITY 92%
Highly enjoyable from the word go...

LASTABILITY 89%
...and plenty of challenging hacking and slashing to keep you going.

OVERALL 91%
A flawless conversion that even improves on the arcade game! Superb!

MEAN YOB!



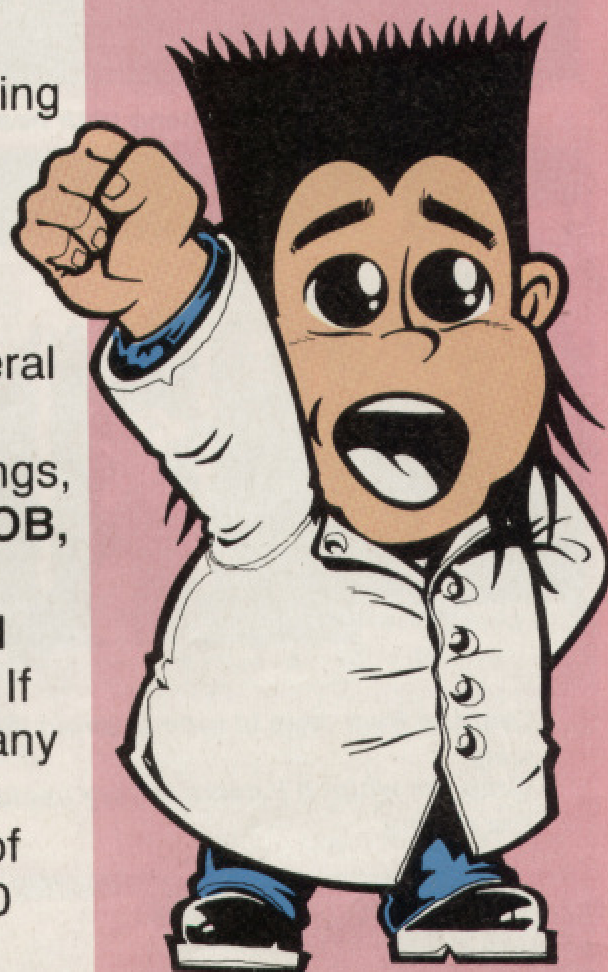
OI!!! I WANT YOUR LETTERS!

That rogue of the Computer and Video Games magazine letters page, YOB!, is expanding his empire and will also be answering the letters sent in to MEAN MACHINES magazine!

So, if you've got anything interesting to say about the magazine - or anything in general come to that, or have jokes, hilarious photos or even drawings, send them in to **THE MEAN YOB, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU**. If your letter, photo or picture is any good, you'll get it printed in the mag. And if it's the best letter of the month, we'll send you £150 worth of console software! So what are you waiting for - get writing!

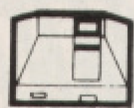
Q+A





Have you got a question you're just dying to get answered? Want to know about release dates of software? Or whether an old game is good or bad? Or whether a game is coming out for your system or not? Or do you have some technical question? Or want to know about some joystick or other?

Basically, if you want to know anything, send you letter to **JAZZA'S Q+A, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU**. Jaz the Editor will put on his special clever trousers, look at all your questions and switch on his vast console-sizzling brain to provide as many answers as possible, which we'll print in the regular monthly Q+A column, which starts next issue. So get scribbling: you supply the questions - we'll supply the answers.



INDIA... AND T... CRUS...

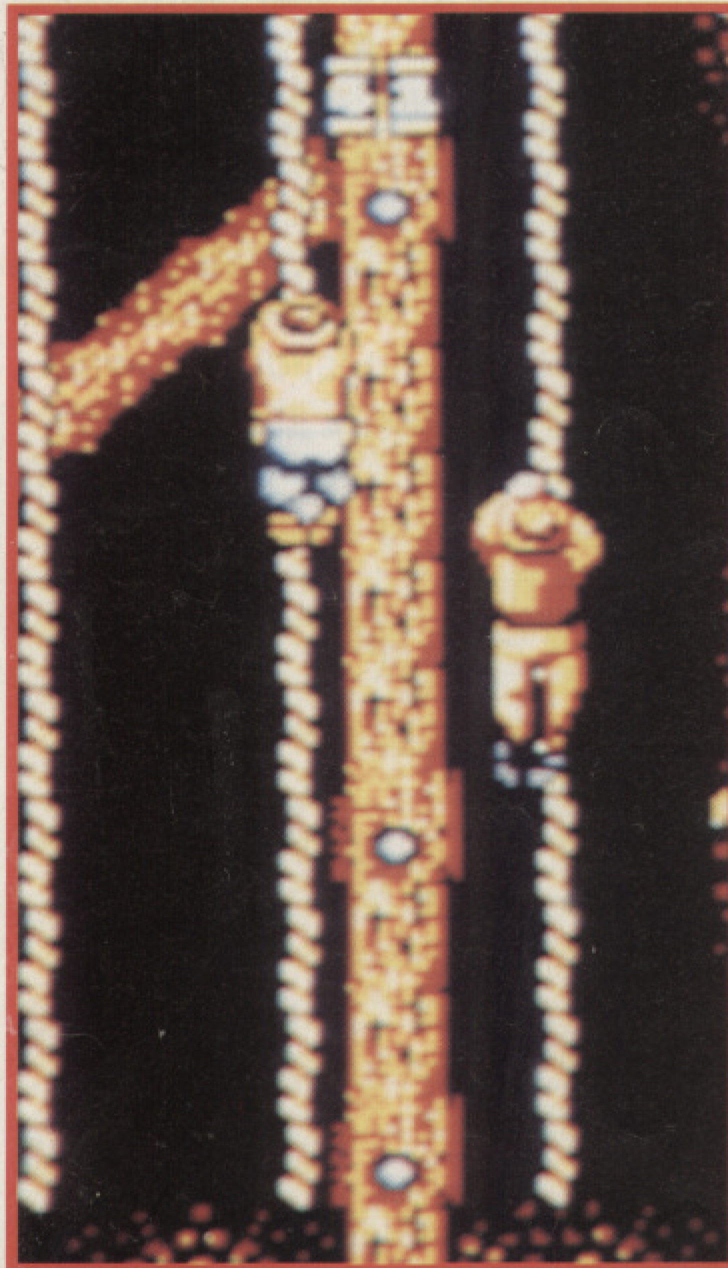
Indy's back - and this time he's brought his Dad. Well, as far as the game itself goes he hasn't (he only appears on a still screen at the end of the game), but by and large Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade follows the plot of the film.

It's a straightforward platform and ladders game in which the hero can run, jump, punch, and (if he's collected the item) whip his opponents so that he can advance.

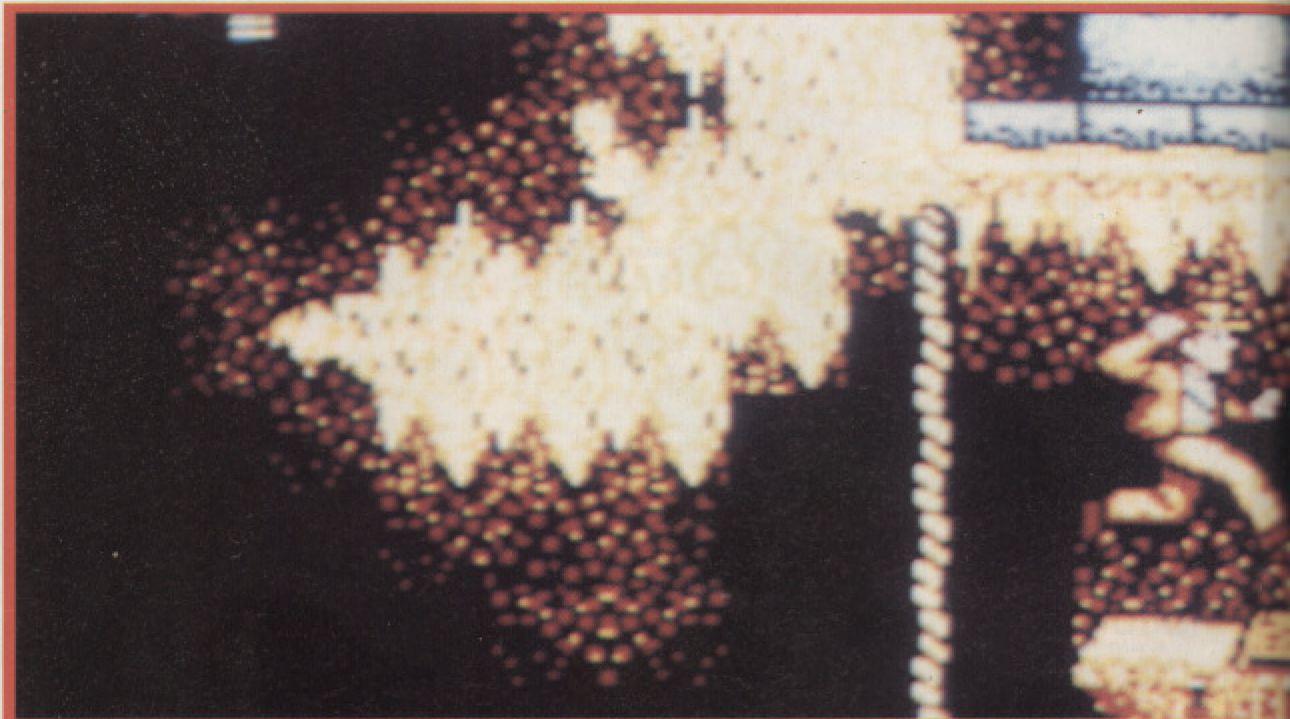
The first level concerns the adventurous archaeologist as a young man journeying through caves to find the Coronado Cross - avoid the baddies, climb the ropes and track down the Cross to move onto the next level, set on a horizontally scrolling train where more baddies (and rouge circus animals) must be avoided to get Indy to safety.

Scene three sees a grown-up Indy hero searching for the shield of the Grail Crusader, an ancient knight - this all takes place in an underground cavern. Once found it's onto Castle Brunwald, then through an airship and finally to the ancient temple where the Grail is located.

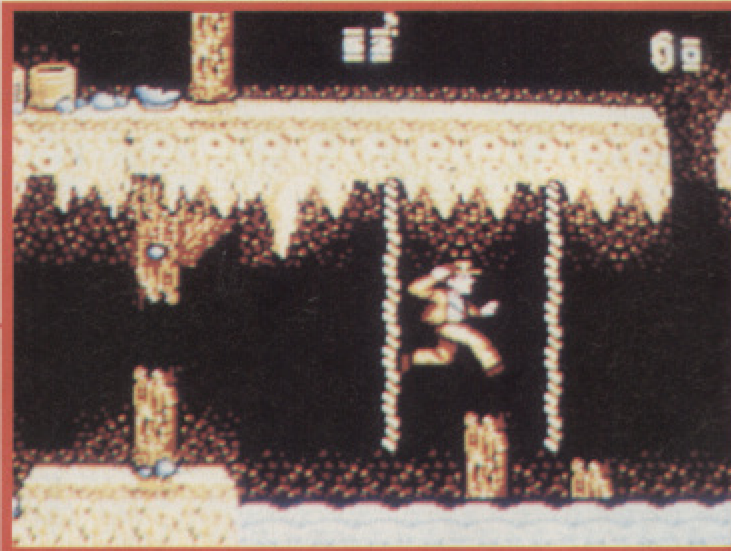
As you can imagine, the game is crawling with nasty Nazis, and all have guns and knives which can do serious damage to your energy if they connect! Being touched by just about anything is fatal - so get toting that whip!



▲ *Indy climbs across the ropes to avoid the enemy.*

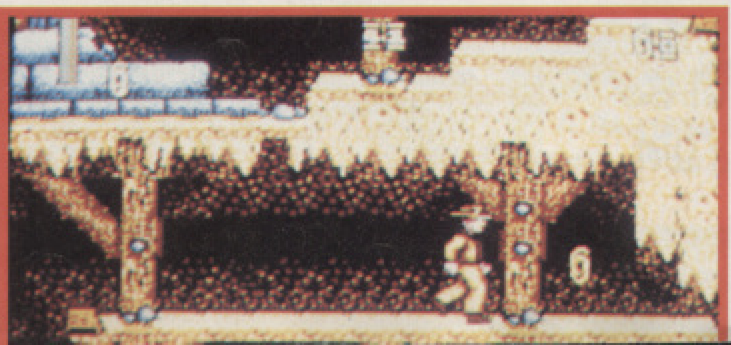


▲ *When you jump, don't bang your head on the ceiling or you'll lose energy.*

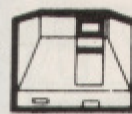


▲ *Leaping from rope to rope to avoid the deadly water.*

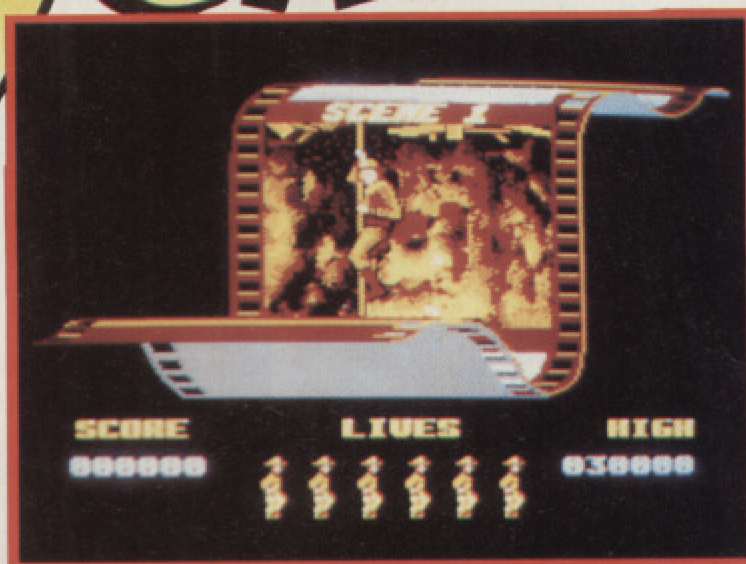
▼ *Grab the whip! It'll come in very useful against the enemy.*







[INDI]ANA JONES [AND] THE LAST [CRU]SADE

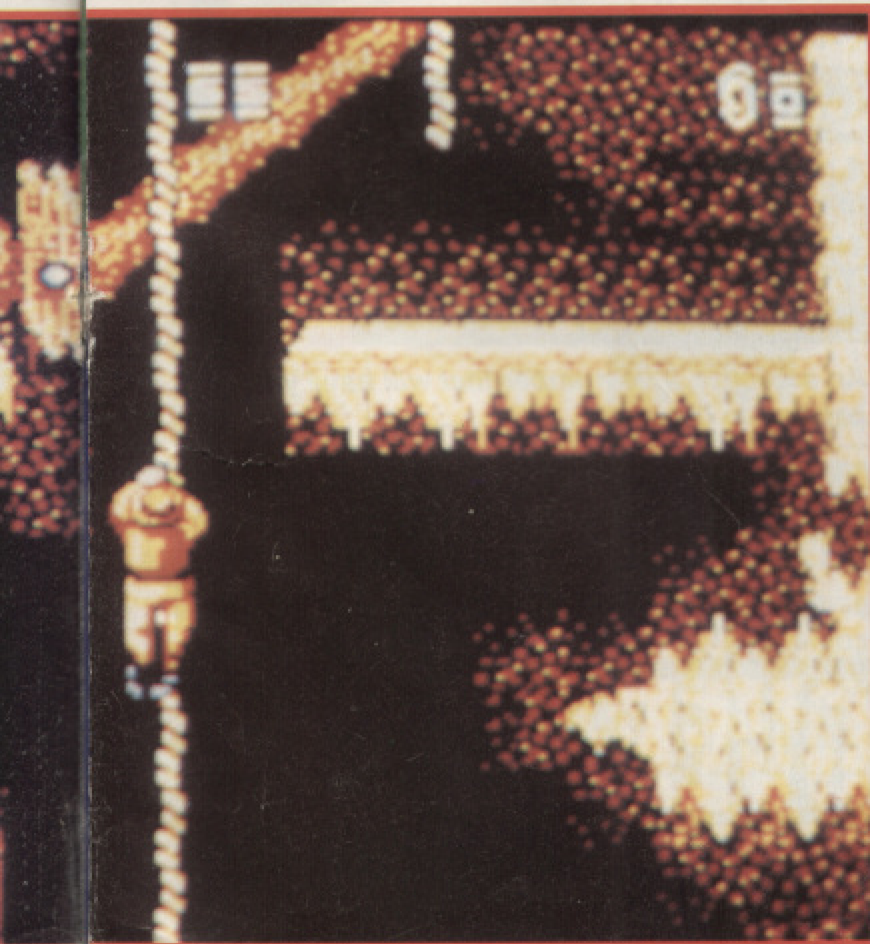


▲ *Each level is introduced by its own title screen.*

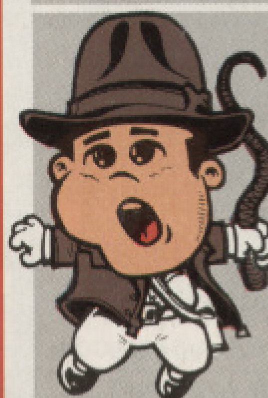


MY CUP RUNNETH OVER

The Holy Grail was supposedly the receptacle of Christ's blood from the Cross, and has been the subject of many quests, theories, and beliefs. It has also been the subject of a number of movies as well as this one. The most irreverent has been Monty Python and the Holy Grail, which featured flying cows, killer rabbits and the Knights who say NI! A more serious approach was taken by the film Excalibur which retold the legend of King Arthur and Merlin, portraying the Grail as the ultimate symbol of faith and rebirth. In the comics world Camelot 3000 (drawn by Brian Bolland of Judge Dredd fame) has explored the idea of Arthur's return - he was, after all, the once and future King - to save Britain in its hour of need. Surprising he's not here already...



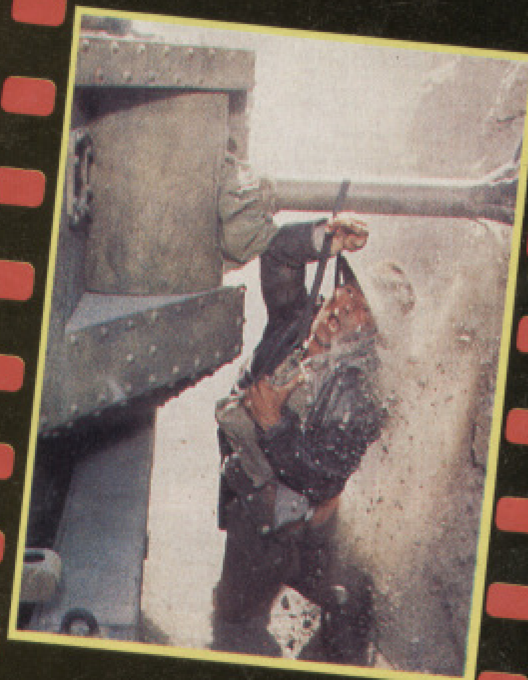
COMMENT



MATT

Indiana Jones is an impressive game with graphics of very high quality, but the gameplay seems to me somewhat limited in comparison. Having said that, the Master System really needs a good platform-style arcade adventure game and this fits the bill with room to spare. Swinging with the whip is great fun and even though the game is very tough, it's addictive and will have you playing long into the night. A high quality game that deserves a place in your software collection.

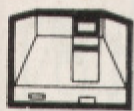




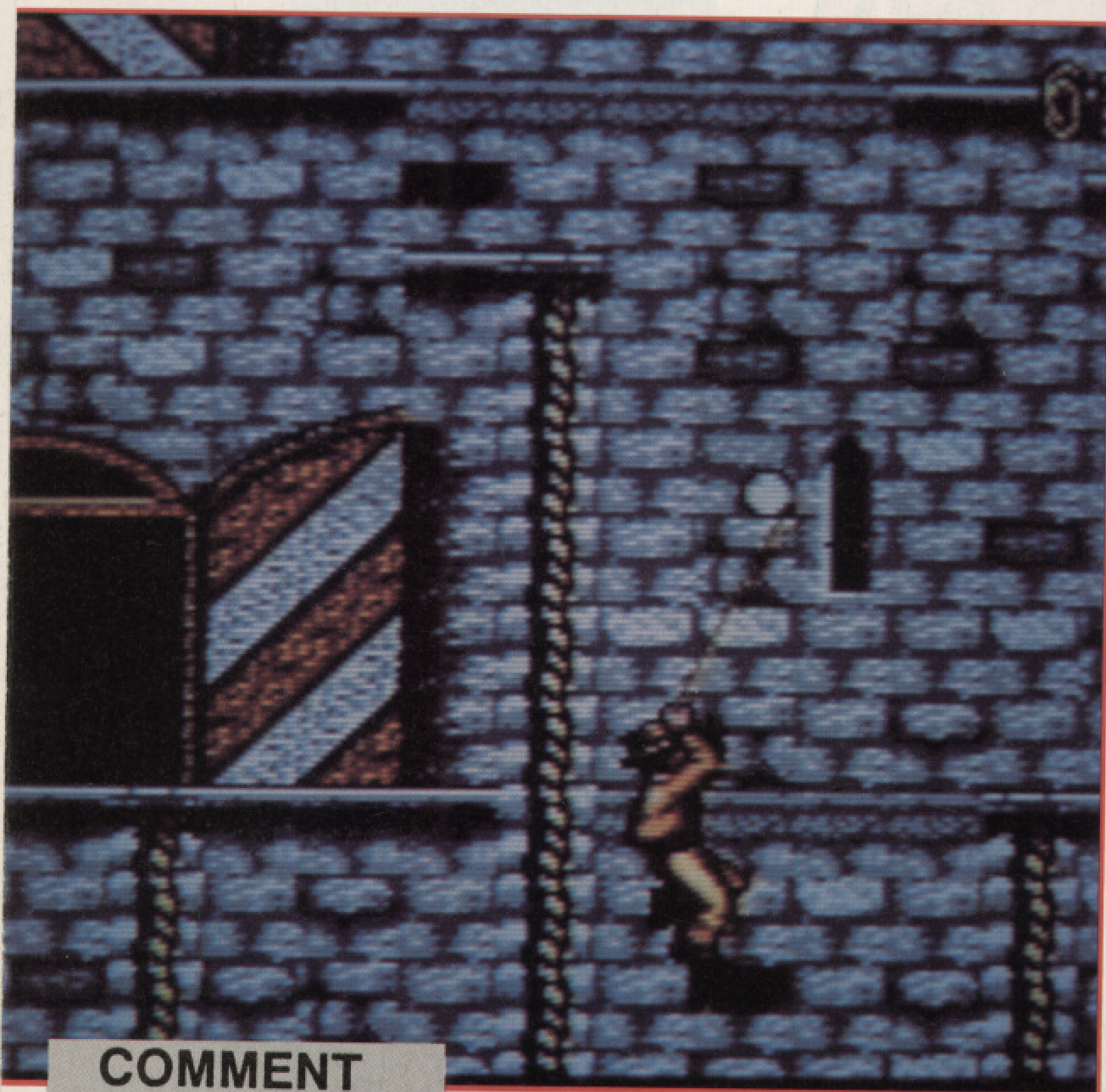
[IN]DIANA JONES and the [TE]MPLE OF DOOM ™

AT THE MOVIES

The Indiana Jones films have enjoyed enormous success since the release of Raiders Of The Lost Ark in 1981. Perhaps the main reason for the popularity of the films is that they reintroduced a witty, self-effacing but believable hero to the cinema, the likes of whom had not been seen since the days of Buck Rogers. Whatever the reason, the Indiana Jones series provided quality entertainment and spectacular effects thanks to the genius of George Lucas. There are no plans to make a fourth film - what a shame!



Indy scales the walls of Castle Brunwald on level three.

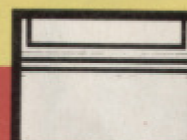


INDIANA JONES and the LAST CRUSADE

REPROGRAMMED GAME
©1990 SEGA, U.S. GOLD
GAME DESIGN AND PROGRAM
TIERTEX LTD.

BY: US GOLD
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 6
CONTINUES: 2
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: ALRIGHT

1-2 PLAYERS

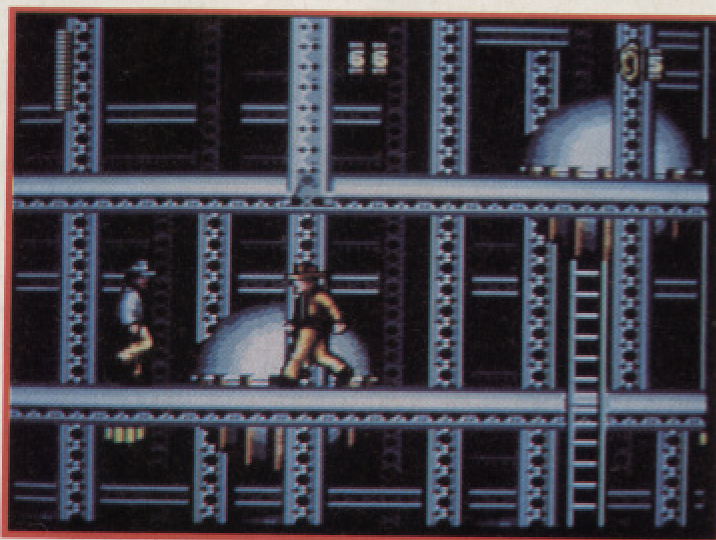




COMMENT

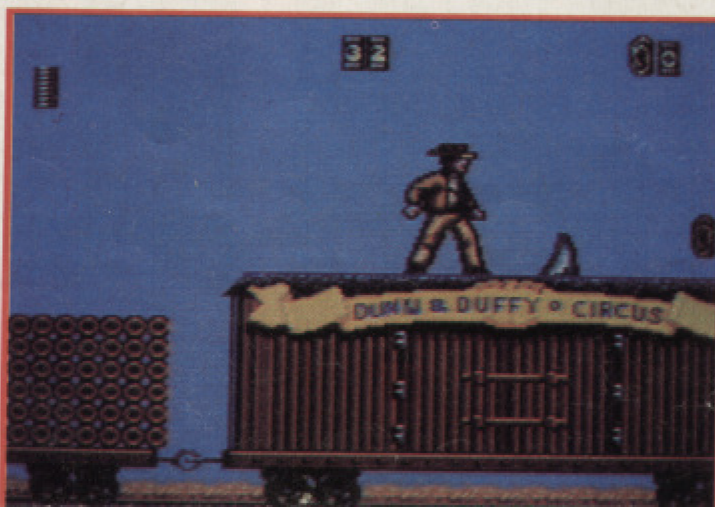


Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade is almost as hard as the hero himself! From the very beginning the odds are stacked against you as you battle an amazingly tight time limit and hordes of gun-wielding heroes. There are plenty of nasty hazards and traps to catch out an unwary Indy - so prepare to lose plenty of lives. It certainly helps if you make a map, since the game is the same every time you play it. The graphics are truly superb, with some of the best sprites and backdrops I've seen on the Sega, and the music's not bad either. Seasoned platforms and ladders fans should be in their element with this - those not so good at this type of game might find it all too frustrating, though.



The airship level where the screen moves up and down to simulate flight! Watch you don't get air-sick!!

Indy runs along the top of a train on level two.



PRESENTATION 76%

No options, and the intro screens are very bland.

GRAPHICS 94%

The detail on the backgrounds is amazing and the Indy sprite is superb.

SOUND 81%

A rendition of the theme music plays throughout which adds atmosphere to the game.

PLAYABILITY 85%

An addictive little number that will have you battling to the end!

LASTABILITY 82%

Not much to hold the attention once the game's been completed, but that will take some time!

OVERALL 85%

You'll believe a man can whip! A great looking game that offers plenty of fun.

ACCESS

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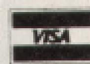
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★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
★★★★COMING SOON★★★★
16-BIT NINTENDO
SEGA GAME GEAR
PC ENGINE HAND-HELD
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★



★★★★YOU'VE ALL TRIED THE BEST.★★★★
★★★★NOW TRY THE REST★★★★



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TOP 10 CHARTS

TOP 10		MEGADRIVE
1		GOLDEN AXE
2		GHOULS/GHOSTS
3		REVENGE SHINOBI
4		SUPER HANG-ON
5		FORGOT'N WORLDS
6		THUNDERFORCE II
7		TRUXTON
8		RAMBO III
9		SPACE HARRIER II
10		THUNDERBLADE





MEGADRIVE

Golden Axe has sliced and diced its way to the top of the charts, closely followed by the stunning conversion of Ghouls 'n' Ghosts. Revenge of Shinobi follows right behind, with Super Hang-On and Forgotten Worlds completing the top five. Truxton is looking good in the number seven slot and Rambo III could well move up from number eight. Space Harrier and Thunderblade prop up the charts - will they be there next month?

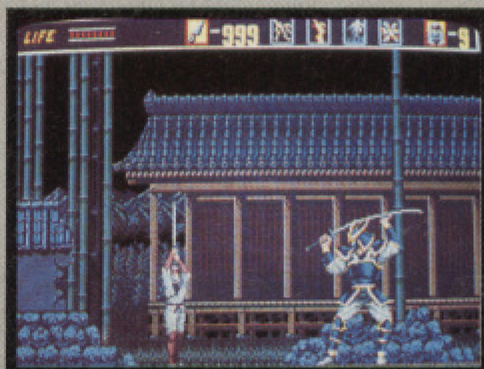


PREDICTIONS

MEGADRIVE: Revenge of Shinobi
SEGA: Impossible Mission
NINTENDO: Turtles!



ALL FORMATS

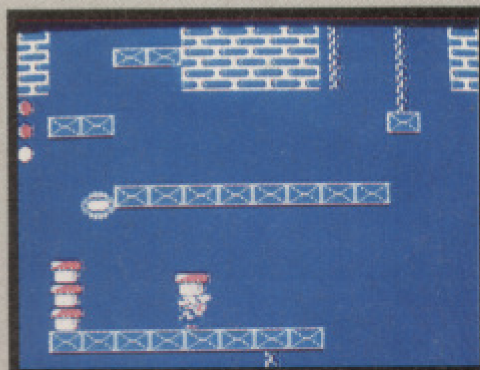


TOP 10 NINTENDO

1	SUPER MARIO II
2	LEGEND ZELDA
3	ADV OF LINK
4	SUPER MARIO
5	TRACK AND FIELD II
6	SIMON'S QUEST
7	MEGAMAN
8	LIFE FORCE
9	PUNCH OUT!!!
10	METAL GEAR

NINTENDO

It's obvious who are the Nintendo players' favourites! Mario and Link dominate the top slots this month - Mario at numbers one and four, and Link at two and three! However, Megaman and Life Force are just outside the top five, and look set to climb higher - watch this space! We confidently predict that the Turtles will storm into the charts next month - check out the review elsewhere in these hallowed pages and you can see exactly what we're talking about!





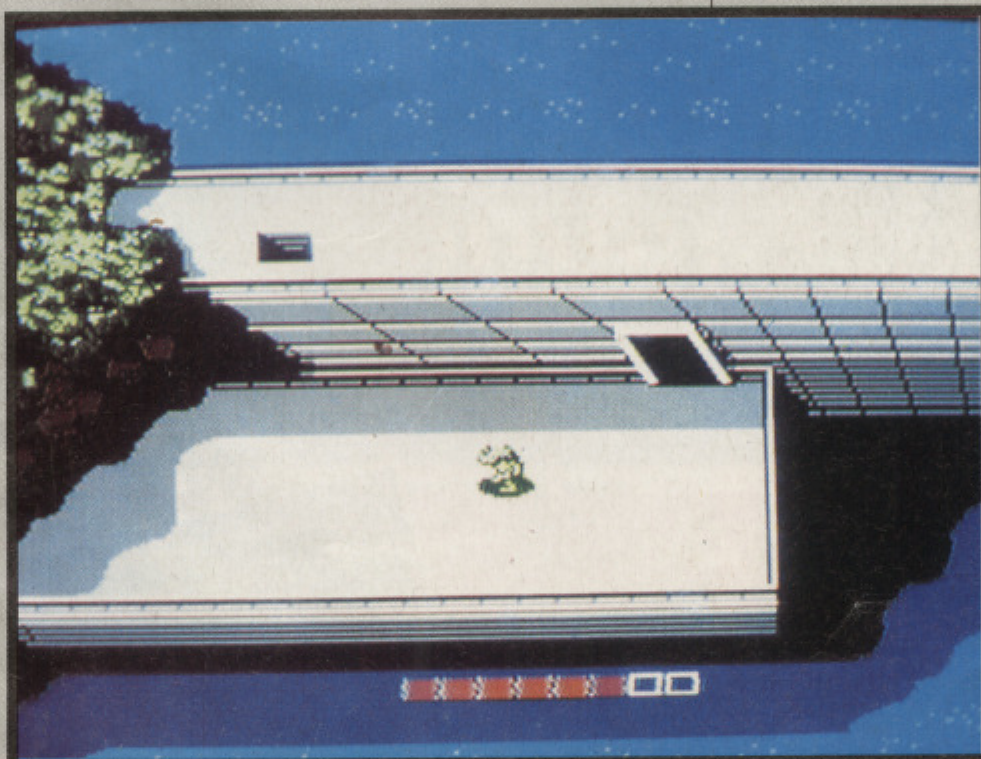
SEGA

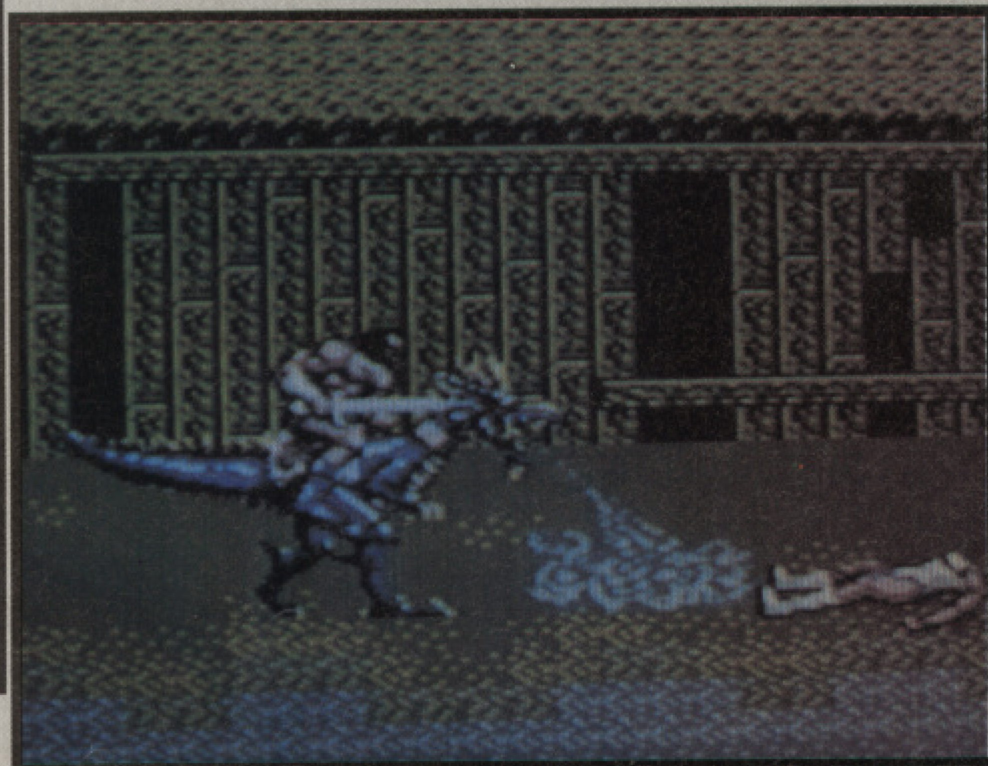
Golden Axe also sits at the top of the Sega chart this month - you people obviously love a good beat 'em up. Just pipped to the number one slot is that super football simulation, World Soccer at its new re-release low price - if you haven't got it, look out for it. Ninja is next - another low-cost special, with the superb California Games and Double Dragon taking up the next two slots. At the low end of the Sega charts is R-Type, World GP and RC Grand Prix (racing games seem to be popular here!), but expect Super Monaco GP and US Gold's excellent games which are reviewed this month to appear very soon indeed.

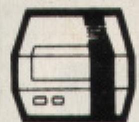
TOP 10 SEGA

1	GOLDEN AXE
2	WORLD SOCCER
3	NINJA
4	CALIFORNIA GAMES
5	DOUBLE DRAGON
6	PSYCHO FOX
7	R-TYPE
8	WORLD GAMES
9	WORLD GP
10	RC GRAND PRIX







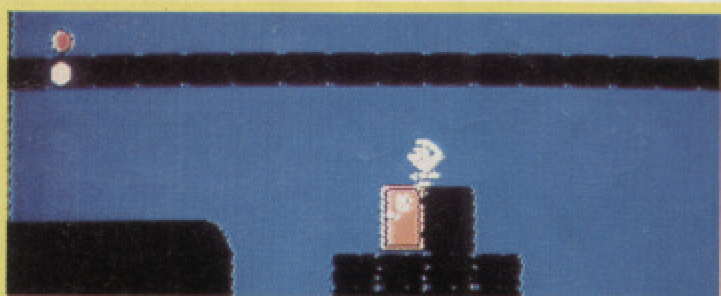


SUP
MARIO B

For a plumber, Mario leads a remarkably odd life. After waking from a dream in which he climbed a staircase, opened a door and heard a call for help, Mario has climbed a staircase in a cave, opened a door and heard a cry for help! Heroic sanitation technician that he is, Mario leaps through the door and finds himself in Subcon where he has to rescue the population from the curse of a vile froglike despot called Wart!

Mario's mission is divided into 20 stages, spread over seven worlds, which are packed with 29 breeds of Wart's evil servants. At the far end of each stage is a large mask which hides the door to the next part of the game, but to get through it, Mario has to destroy a boss character who throws either eggs, bombs or rocks, by grabbing the missiles and throwing them straight back.

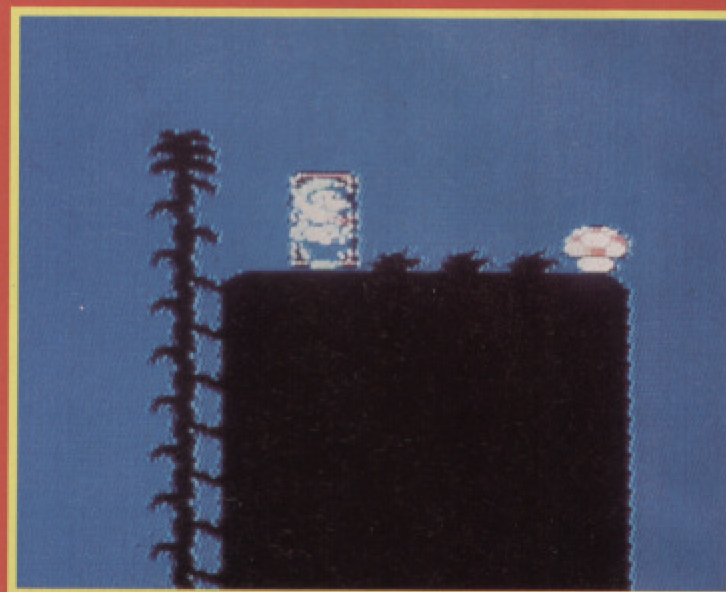
Each world has it's own type of terrain, and Mario can find himself legging it over green hills, sheets of ice, schools of whales, deadly desert quicksand, through caves - sometimes he even takes to the clouds!



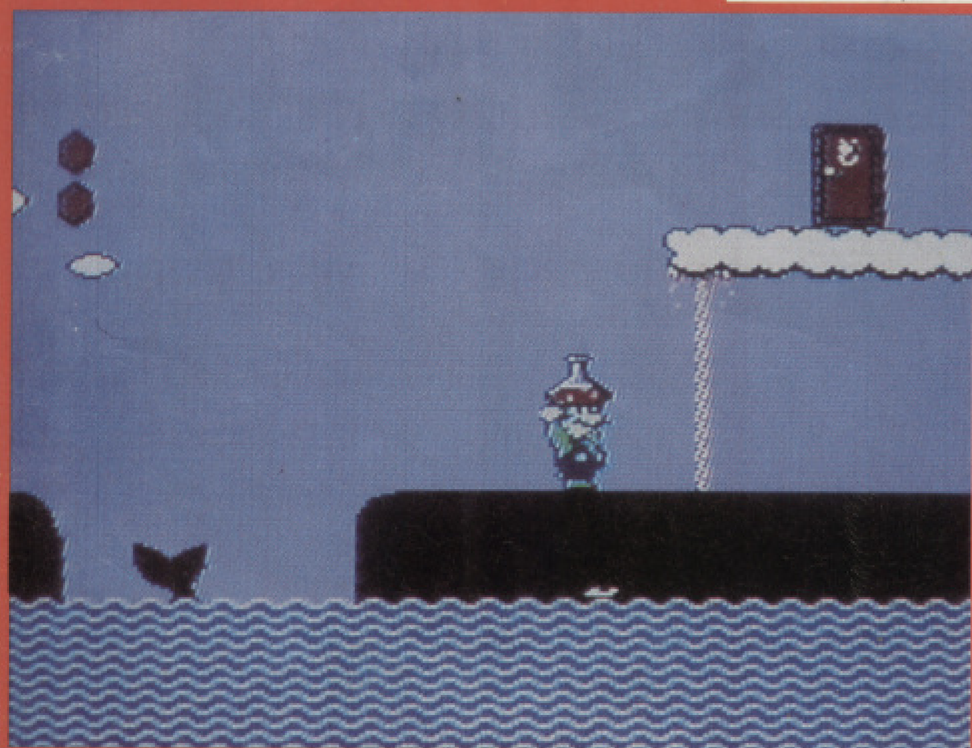
▲ *Oohh, it's dark in here - see if there's anything to discover!*

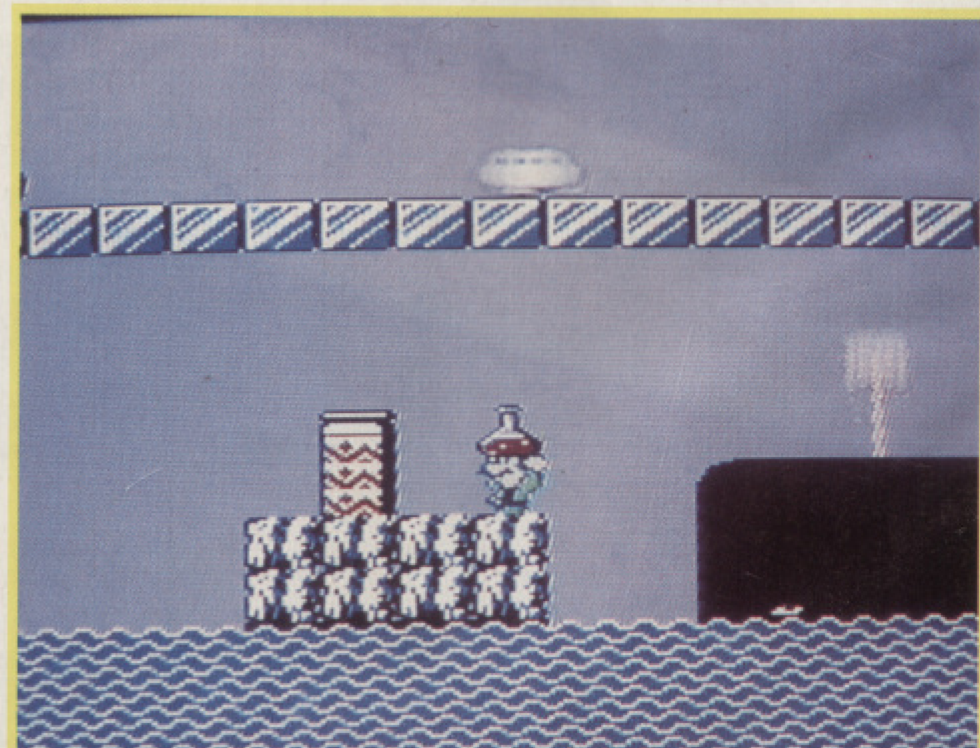
JOURNEYS INTO SUBSPACE

When Mario plucks a potion, and throws it to the ground a door appears. Dash through the door and he's in subspace, where pulling up plants produces coins, and mushrooms boost your life points (shown by the red shapes at top left). There are also secret warps to be found, but you have to know where to look...



▼ *Careful placing of the potion makes your life easier!*





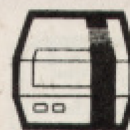
CARRY ON CARRYING

Since his last adventure, Mario has acquired a new skill. By standing over an object and pressing the B button, Mario grabs the object and carries it over his head then another press of the B button throws the object forward. Sometimes there are even hidden object to pull up, like mushrooms, extra lives and potions!

BONUS BONANZA BANDIT

If you've collected any coins from Subspace, you can play the bonus bandit. Every shot costs a coin, but if you can stop the reels on three similar shapes, or line up a cherry, Mario is awarded an extra life!





PER II BROS II



STARS ON SUBCON

Before you start each section of each world you can choose to play one of the four characters shown, each of whom have different characteristics. From left to right:

MARIO: Strong and runs fast, but not so good at jumping.

LUIGI: A slower runner than Mario, but a very high jumper. The best character for most of the early stages.

TOAD: Very strong. Unlike the other characters, Toad can carry objects without slowing down.

PRINCESS TOADSTOOL: Instead of jumping, the Princess can float in mid-air for about a second. Not very strong or fast, though.

COMMENT



JULIAN

Super Mario Bros II simply oozes playability. The difficulty level is perfectly set so that you always seem to get a little bit further each time you play - or discover yet another secret room or warp! Consequently the game is incredibly addictive. The only criticism I've got is that there's no score - it would be nice to be able to go for a highscore record as well as beating the game itself. Other than that, though, Super Mario II is one of the most enjoyable Nintendo games around. Roll on Super Mario III.

MARIO III - COMING SOON

Mario III is set for release early next year, and features a vast playing area and a huge number of power-ups and secret tricks for Mario fans to master. In Japan, work has already begun on Super Mario Brothers IV, but while we wait with bated breath for that, Nintendo are soon to release Dr Mario, a Tetris-alike in which the player has to fit together pills of the same colour. In the true Mario tradition, it's very weird, but looks like great fun!!

COMMENT



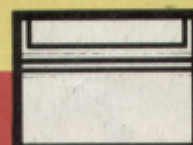
MATT

Super Mario Brothers can't have been an easy act to follow, so Nintendo really had their work cut out producing a follow-up. But they've done it, and SMB2 is even better! Cute and highly detailed characters and colourful backgrounds really make it look cartoony and fun, and the music and sound effects match the graphics for jolliness. But the gameplay's what's most important, and even in this respect, SMB 2 tops the original! All the new characters and the new abilities add a further dimension to the original platform fun. At nearly £40.00 it's one of the most expensive Nintendo carts, but any fan of the original will certainly get his money's worth!

SUPER MARIO BROS II

BY: NINTENDO
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 90%
Very detailed instruction booklet. Choice of player characters, hidden tricks and a nifty bonus game.

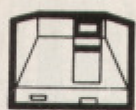
GRAPHICS 89%
Great character graphics, nicely animated. Overall, very jolly.

SOUND 89%
Excellent music (some remixes of the original Super Mario music) and really cute sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 94%
Inventive and enjoyable gameplay make this a real pleasure to play.

LASTABILITY 85%
Twenty stages which start off easy but get very challenging in tougher terrains.

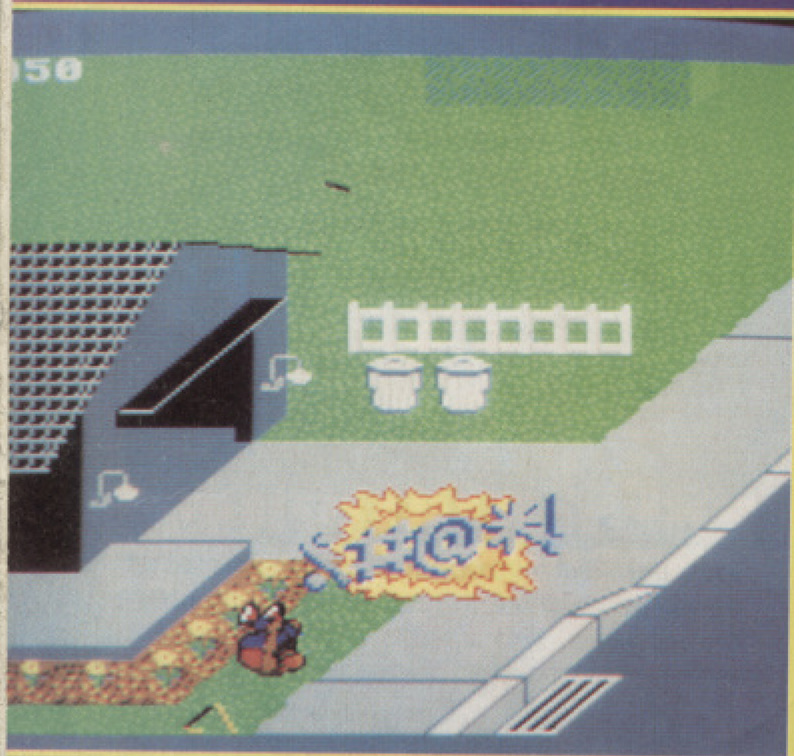
OVERALL 89%
A tremendous sequel to Super Mario Brothers.



PAPERBOY



▲ *Line up for that mailbox.*



▲ *Paperboy rides into an obstacle. What a twit.*

▼ *Ah! A non-subscriber! Wreck his flower beds!*

Atari's Paperboy first appeared in the arcades around four and a half years ago, and cast you as a paper deliverer whose round takes him to the very strangest parts of town. In this Sega conversion, virtually all of the original coin-op's features have been included as you battle against the odds to get your papers delivered.

At the start of the game there are three streets to choose from, effectively giving three difficulty levels. Each level is split into seven sub-levels, each of which represents a day of the week. The object is simply to survive until Sunday.

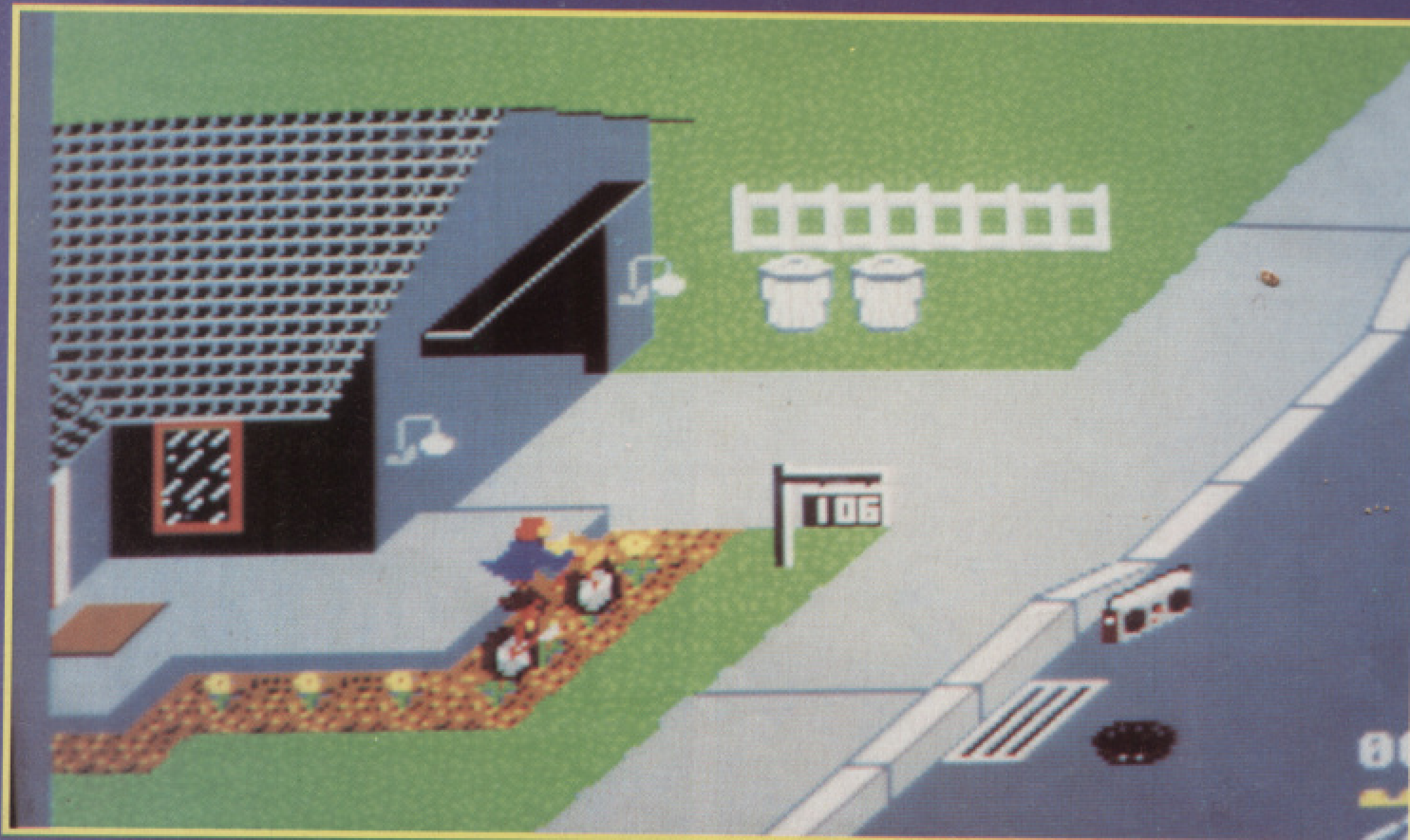
At the beginning of each round you're shown a map of your delivery route. You must deliver papers to every subscriber, by throwing them either into their mailboxes or on their doormats as you cycle past.

Non-subscribers should be treated with the contempt they deserve, so throw spare papers through their windows and ride all over their nice flower beds for bonus points.

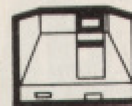
If you fail to deliver a paper to a subscriber, he cancels his subscription - a perfect round of deliveries, however, results in new customers!

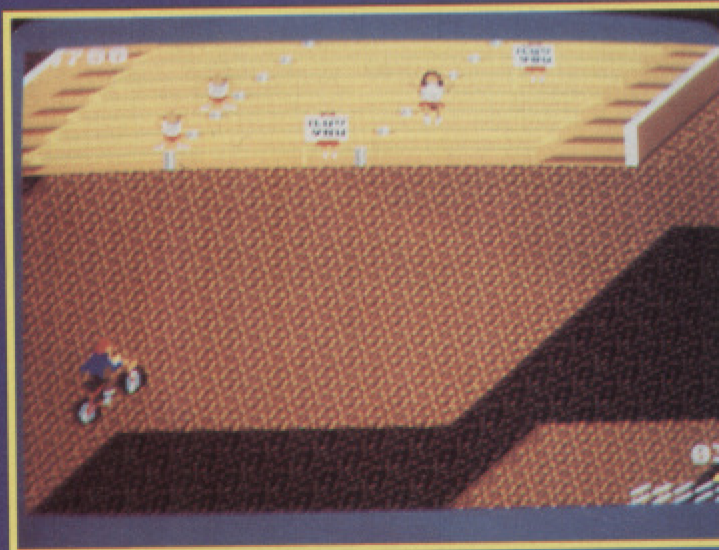
Things are complicated by the presence of various obstacles such as lawn mowers, buggies, cassette players, and even ghosts! If you hit any of these, a life is lost - so careful with those handlebars.



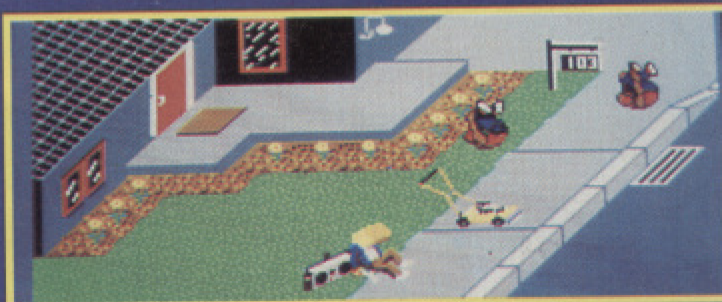


The perils that await you on your route are numerous. First off, all stationary objects such as mailboxes and traffic cones must be avoided, which is fairly straightforward. Other dangers are trickier, for example poodles that come scurrying towards you and out-of-control motorised toy cars, tyres and even breakdancers that zoom around in set patterns. They're all deadly - so you have to be pretty nifty with your bike to avoid them all!

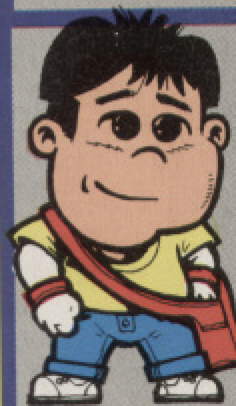




Paperboy's girlie gang greets him at the end of a level.



COMMENT



MATT

I remember crowding around the coin-op all those years ago - and this version captures that "can't leave it alone" feeling! The originality of the arcade game coupled with the brilliance of this conversion makes this a real winner as far as I'm concerned: it's the best translation onto a home machine there's been. It's difficult, but doesn't seem to be while you're playing it - that's the beauty of this game! Whether or not you are a fan of the coin-op, this will keep you happy for a long time, so don't delay: buy Paperboy and get delivering!

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

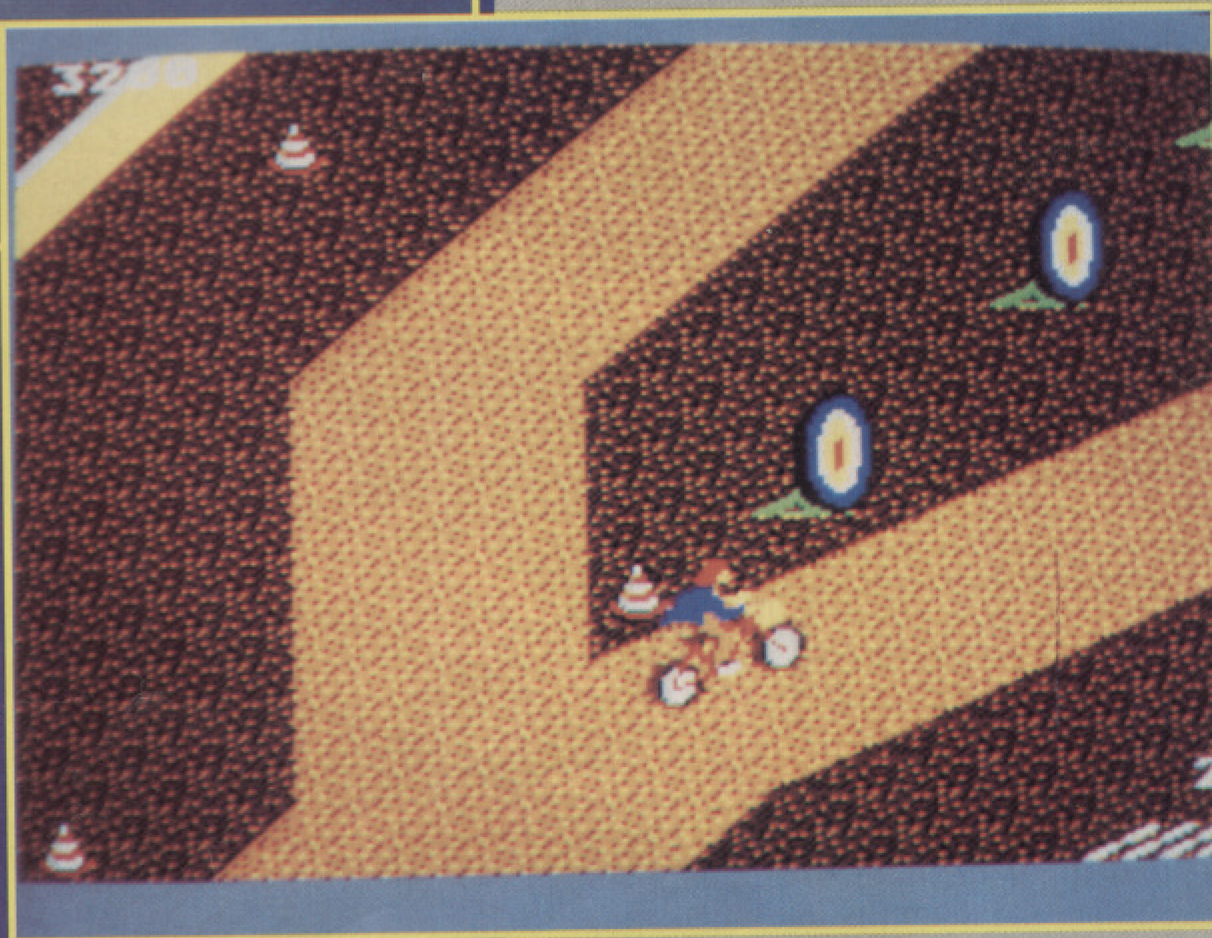
There's a bonus round at the end of each day which not only helps improve your aiming abilities - there are targets all along the course to hit for bonus points - but also lets you practice maneuvering, with ramps and tight turns to keep you on your toes. These skills are important for when you progress from Easy Street to Medium Road or Hard Way (the three different levels).

THE ORIGINAL COIN-OP

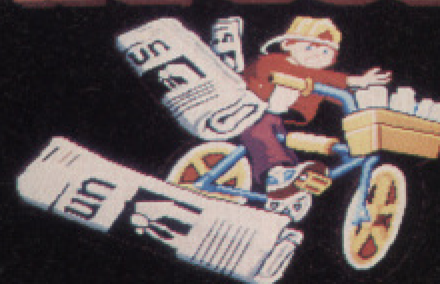
The original Atari coin-op appeared in early 1986 and wowed arcade goers with its combination of great graphics, sampled speech and unusual handlebar controls. However, it did have one flaw - right at the end of the bonus round, cycling between the grandstand and the fence sent the scoring system crazy, and you'd end up with well over a billion points!

Select a street at the start.



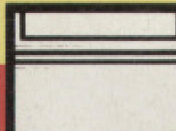






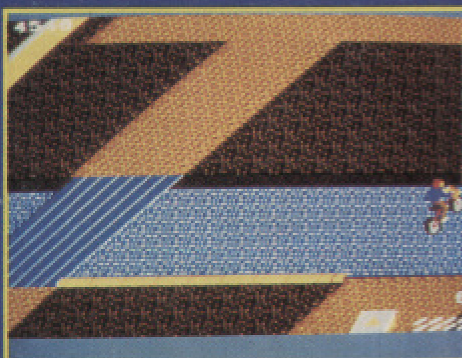
BY: US GOLD
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 4
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD

1-2 PLAYERS



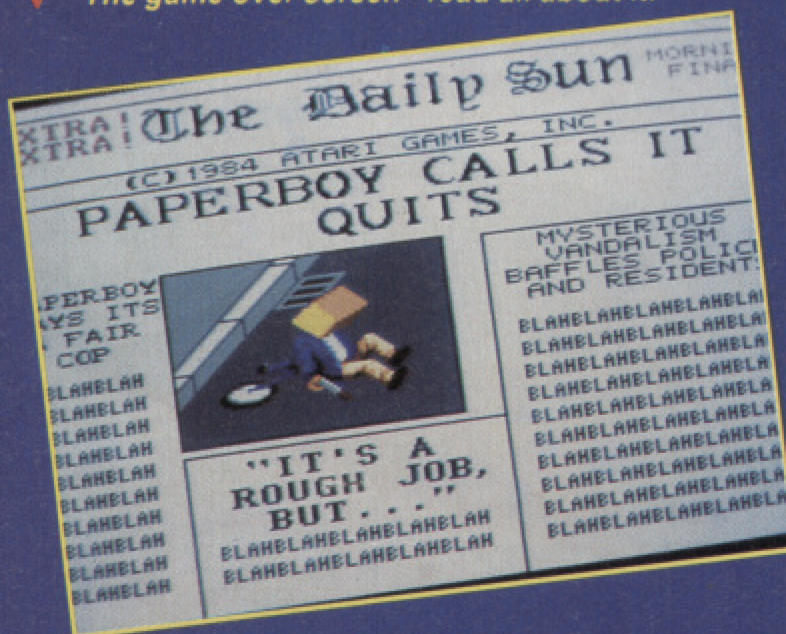


▲ Aagggh! It's a mad 'n' manic monocyclist!

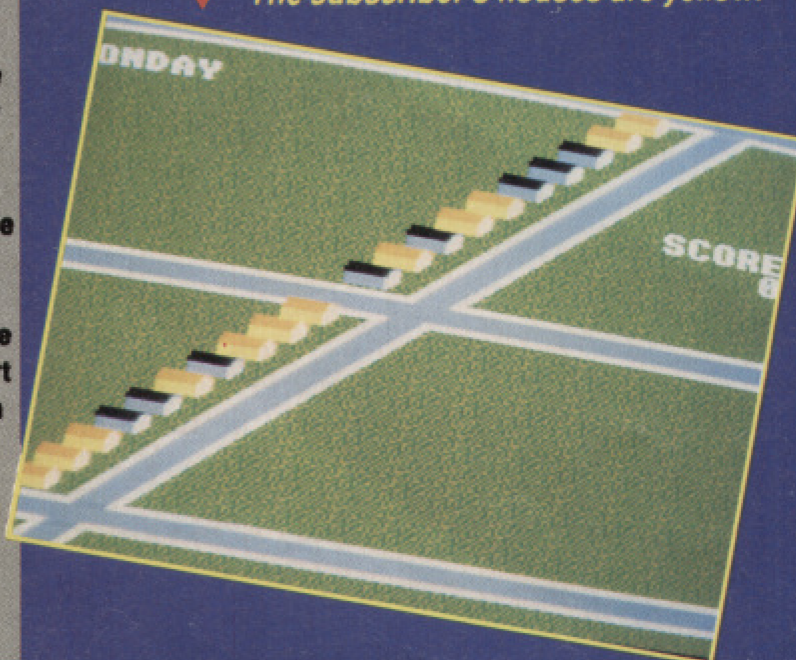


▲ Use the ramps to jump.

▼ The game over screen - read all about it.



▼ The subscriber's houses are yellow.



COMMENT



JULIAN

This conversion captures all the humour, originality and playability of the arcade machine. It seems very straightforward at first, but once mad dogs, nutty street dancers, runaway tyres and even rogue drivers enter the fray, things start getting very tough indeed. It's great fun trying to get all the papers in the mailboxes, but my favourite part of the game is causing as much damage to non-subscribers' properties as possible! With its fantastic graphics and faithful arcade tunes, Paperboy should find a place in any arcade fan's cartridge collection.

PRESENTATION 84%
Excellent intro screens and three skill levels.

GRAPHICS 89%
So close to the coin-op there's no real difference.

SOUND 79%
Boppy tunes keep you humming.

PLAYABILITY 89%
As playable and addictive as the arcade machine!

LASTABILITY 78%
Plenty of challenge and lots of lasting appeal.

OVERALL 85%
It's great to see a classic game like this translated so well. Brilliant!

WIN! A MEGA CONSOLE!

SEGA



MEGADRIVE



GX4000



NINTENDO



Want to try and win a new console? Of course you do. Well, new games importers, and all-round nice guys Dai-Ichi Consoles UK have come up with a great prize for this mega-comp. The lucky dude or dudette who comes first in this comp can choose one of the glorious console packages listed below:

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM WITH THREE GAMES OF YOUR CHOICE

NINTENDO WITH THREE GAMES OF YOUR CHOICE

MEGADRIVE WITH A GAME OF YOUR CHOICE

PC ENGINE WITH A GAME OF YOUR CHOICE

GAMEBOY WITH FOUR GAMES OF YOUR CHOICE

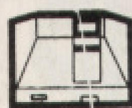
Or if you're not so keen on winning a new console and just want a load of new games, there's the choice of...

£150.00 WORTH OF CONSOLES SOFTWARE FOR YOUR MACHINE

Great eh? But what do you have to do to stand a chance of winning this competition? Well, we want you to answer the question below:

WHAT WAS THE HIGHEST-RATED GAME REVIEWED IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE?

Now that's what we call simple. Put the answer down on the back of a postcard or sealed-down envelope and send it off to: **IF I WON I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO CHOOSE COMP, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.** The closing date is Nov 26th - after that day we'll be putting all the entries into a sack, and the first one out wins.



REVIEW

GAUNT

The arcade smash has finally arrived on the Master System! This game was a sensation when appeared in 1986, and this version has all the features of the original machine.

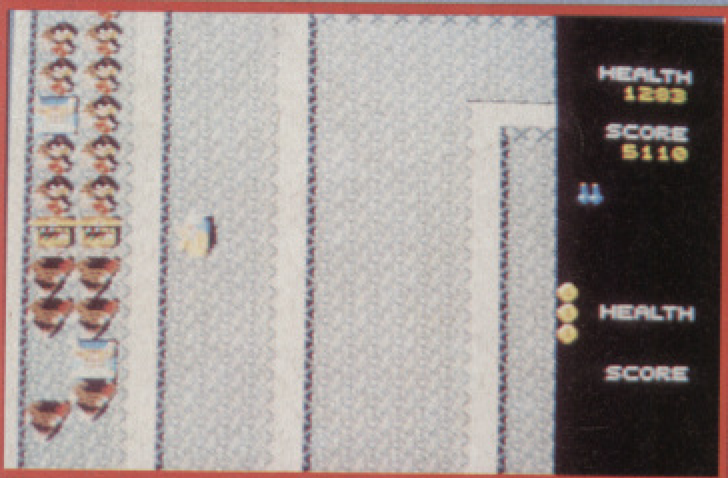
Each player (and there can be two at once) selects a character - either the Valkyrie, Elf, Wizard, or Warrior. Then you're thrown in at the deep end - placed in a huge scrolling dungeon full of creepy creatures and malevolent monsters! All you have to do is make your way to the exit - not easy because there's a vast army of creatures out to knock down your health points.

The levels are littered with treasure chests, which give bonus points when collected. Food can also be found which adds 100 points to your health, and there are also potions which give temporary benefits such as invulnerability and spells which damage or kill everything on-screen when unleashed.

Gird your loins, hoist your axe, and prepare to enter the dark catacombs to kill the dragon - but write your will before you go!



▲ *Treasure galore, but those piles of bones have a nasty habit of becoming ghosts!*



◀ *Don't be fooled by this shot - the action is fast and furious!*

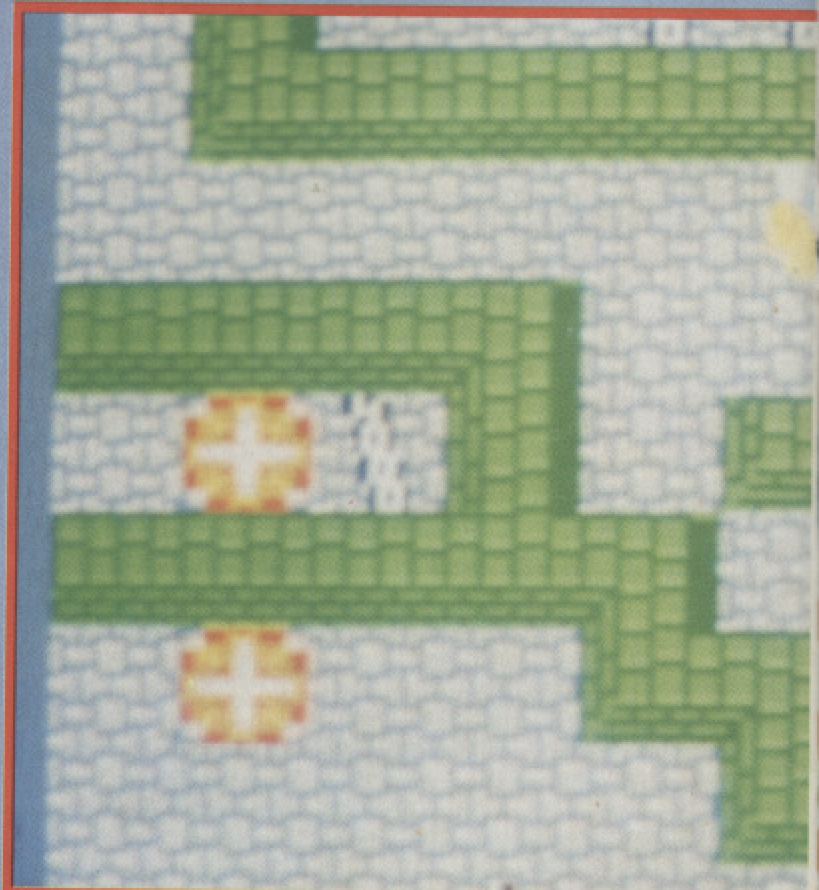
▼ *Do you really want to go in there?*



TWO-PLAYER LAFFS

The game really comes into its own when played with a friend. They don't have to start simultaneously, but can join in at any stage. Thor the warrior makes a good companion to Merlin, as his superb shot power and 20% armour gives him real muscle to cleave his way through the dungeon while Merlin stands back and blasts from afar. But don't ignore Thyra the Valkyrie and Questor the Elf - they both have useful talents!

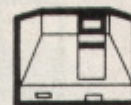
▼ *Don't forget to collect the keys in the right order.*



LET

SEGA

REVIEW



Which way must you go to get the potion?

WHO TO BE?

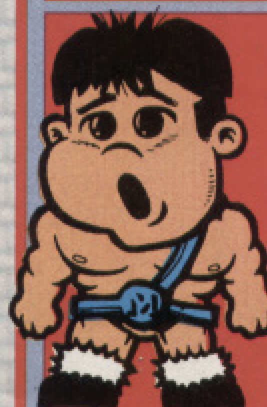
Merlin the Wizard is the best character to choose when playing solo: his shots and magic power are very powerful, and are quite capable of destroying the monster generators scattered around. His lack of armour and poor hand-to-hand skills mean that it's best to dodge foes whenever possible.

Thyra the Valkyrie is tough, fires strong shots and can use magic well - a good character for solo play, but not quite as good as the wizard.

Questor the Elf is very puny and hand-to-hand combat causes him much damage. His shots aren't particularly powerful, but he can use magic almost as well as the wizard and can run faster than all the other characters.

Big, tough **Thor the Barbarian** is great for hand-to-hand combat - most baddies hardly scratch him. His shots are powerful too, but he's a bit slow and his magic powers are almost zero.

COMMENT



MATT

I was flabbergasted by this game - it's fast, furious, and above all faithful to the coin op. Seriously, the whole Mean Machines team were impressed by this game, which is challenging but still accessible. The graphics are brilliant and the sound fits the game well, but it's the playability that made me love the game so much (I was a big fan of the arcade machine). Atmosphere is an important element in any game, and Gauntlet positively oozes the stuff. Turning a corner only to be confronted with a dozen ghosts is an experience you won't forget in a hurry! Reaching the later levels is a tough challenge, but is by no



MONSTER MUNCH

There are a variety of monsters - here's a list so you know what to expect.

SORCERERS: Can turn invisible so that your shots go right through them! Use hand-to-hand combat for best results.

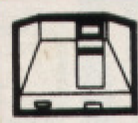
DEMONS: Shoot fireballs at you and bite when close. Biting causes less damage, so move close and bash 'em.

GHOSTS: Must be shot because of the damage they do if you let them too near.

LOBBERS: Can throw rocks over walls, so watch out. They run away when you get close, so shoot them from a distance.

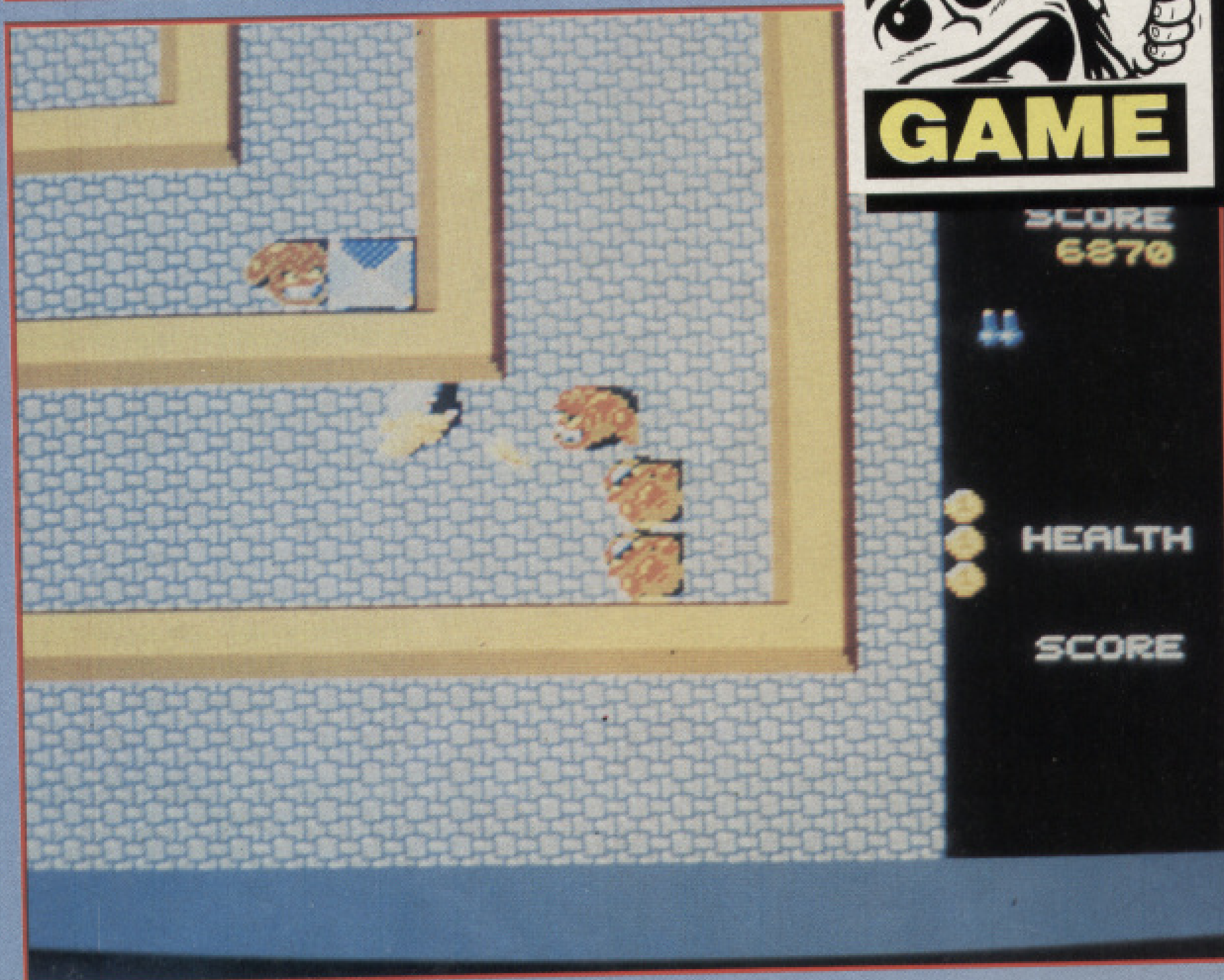
GRUNTS: Big [illegible] who a[illegible] too close and charge you.

DEATH: The baddest dud[illegible] Drains health rapidly and [illegible] spell.





MEGA GAME



▲ Use your missiles to keep these nasties at bay.

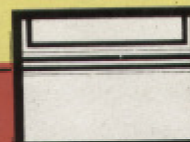


BY: US GOLD

PRICE: £29.99

RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: 4
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: MEGA

1-2 PLAYERS







▲ Your paths are blocked, so you'll have to fight your way out!

▼ Answering the door to some Jehovah's Witnesses.



COMMENT



JULIAN

Gauntlet has appeared on virtually every home computer system on Earth, and I'm glad to say that the Sega version tops the lot for sheer addictive playability. The game is played at a tremendous speed, and each dungeon is packed with literally hundreds of vile and gruesome creatures all out to get you - as you can imagine, it's action all the way! As well as being very playable, the graphics and sound are also excellent. The sprites are small, but they're superbly detailed, and the backdrops are very polished, giving the game a true arcade look. With 100 different levels to challenge you, Gauntlet won't lose its appeal in a hurry. If you've got a Sega, do yourself a favour and plug this into it.

PRESENTATION 83%

Nothing too flashy, but you'd rather be getting on with the game anyway.

GRAPHICS 86%

The screens are large and clear, and the sprites are well-defined. What more could you ask?

SOUND 81%

Acceptable throughout the game.

PLAYABILITY 94%

There's no beating this for fun and frolics!

LASTABILITY 89%

With a hundred levels and a password system you've got a very long-lasting game.

OVERALL 92%

Don't miss this exciting old-but-ageless classic!

The YOB has had his ear to the ground and brings you gossip, rumour and scandal from all around the consoles world.

YOB'S GOSSIP

TURTLES GO MEGADRIVE
According to my sources from Japan, those green, three-toed dudes in half-shells, the Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles will soon be appearing on the Megadrive. Not in an original arcade adventure like the Nintendo game reviewed this month, but in a conversion of the hit coin-op. Great - that'll save me some ten pees. And before you Nintendo owners start getting your knicks in a twist, a Nintendo version is also currently being programmed. And if you've got a Sega Master System - tough pizzas.

MEGA CD-ROM
I've just got wind of the CD-ROM player that Sega are currently working on for the Megadrive. It's an amazing-sounding machine, with huge potential. Unlike the PC Engine CD-ROM and forthcoming Amiga CD-TV CD-ROM machine, it doesn't suffer from "blank screen syndrome" as new data is loaded in. Oh, no. The Sega machine is capable of loading data while simultaneously running a game, digitised pictures, or even CD-quality sound 'cos it's got an extra custom processor in the CD-ROM unit itself. Sounds brilliant to me! I can't wait to see Dragon's Lair - a supposedly flawless copy of the complete arcade game which has been converted to run on it. Want the good news? It'll cost around £100 when it's released. How about the bad news? It won't be available until next Christmas. Boo!

PC ENGINE COMING
A spokesperson from NEC in America has revealed that the PC Engine will definitely be launched in this country next year - not in the little white console form we know, but in the guise if the big black American Turbografx 16. About flipping time too! With stonking good games like Gunhed, Devil Crash, PC Kid, R-Type, Final Lap Twin, the PC Engine - or should I say Turbografx - deserves to be given a chance here in the UK. I just hope NEC pick a sensible and affordable price tag - £99.99 would make it a winner in my eyes...

HAND-HELD FUN
Another piece of NEC gossip that was whispered into my shell-like was that the hand-held PC Engine, the Turboexpress will appear in Europe in the first quarter of next year. What with Atari's Lynx II and Sega's Game Gear, both colour portables, set to appear next year, I think it's time for me to buy some shares in Duracell and Ever Ready...

KEEP ON BONKING
And still on the subject of the PC Engine, I've just discovered that PC Kid has been renamed Bonk in the USA. That would be funny in itself - but the advert for the game has the slogan "Bonk your way to success" on it. It never worked for me...

KONIX SHOCK NEWS
No. Sorry. I'm lying. There isn't any.

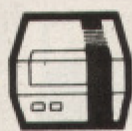
SIMULATION STIMULATION
One of the big arguments computer owners use when putting down consoles is that console software is all simplistic arcade-style stuff. Well, now you Megadrive owners can tell them to go sniff a dog's bottom - coming in the not-too-distant future to your machine are G88 Attack Sub, a submarine warfare simulation, Spectrum Holobyte's super flight simulation, Falcon, Microprose's superb aerial combat simulation, F-15 Strike Eagle II and the tank battle simulation, Abrahm's Battle Tank!

RPG NO RIP
And still on the same subject, if those self same people try and pull the "well my computer runs complex RPGs with loads of depth" stunt, you Megadrive owners can make their joysticks wilt with envy when you reel off this list of forthcoming whopper RPGs: Ultima VI, Phantasy Star II, Vermillion and Y/S - all feature battery-backed RAM game-save options, a vast playing area and loads of depth.

32-BIT MEGAMACHINE
Another Sega leak is that work is well underway on their new 32-bit super-console. It'll be based around the technology used in their new 32-bit arcade machines, which basically means loads more power, loads more sprites, loads more colours, loads higher definition and it'll most probably cost loads more money than the Megadrive. It'll certainly blow all existing consoles right out of the water - unfortunately it won't be seen until 1992. Ah well! Something to look forward to I suppose.

ATARI RUMOUR
It's rumoured that Atari are about to produce a new console that's as powerful as the Neo Geo at an "affordable price" - somewhere around £200.00. It's called the Panther and incorporates powerful custom processors. I don't know anything else - so don't ask me any questions about it.

Alright, that's it for this month. By the way, if any of you lovely industry people have any naughty gossip - give the office a ring. Confidentiality guaranteed...



REVIEW



Cowabunga! It's pizza time! Well, it would be, but April, the Turtles' trusted friend, has been kidnapped by the evil Shredder who hopes to indoctrinate her into his gang. The Turtles have no choice but to go and rescue her - a mission that is fraught with danger all the way!

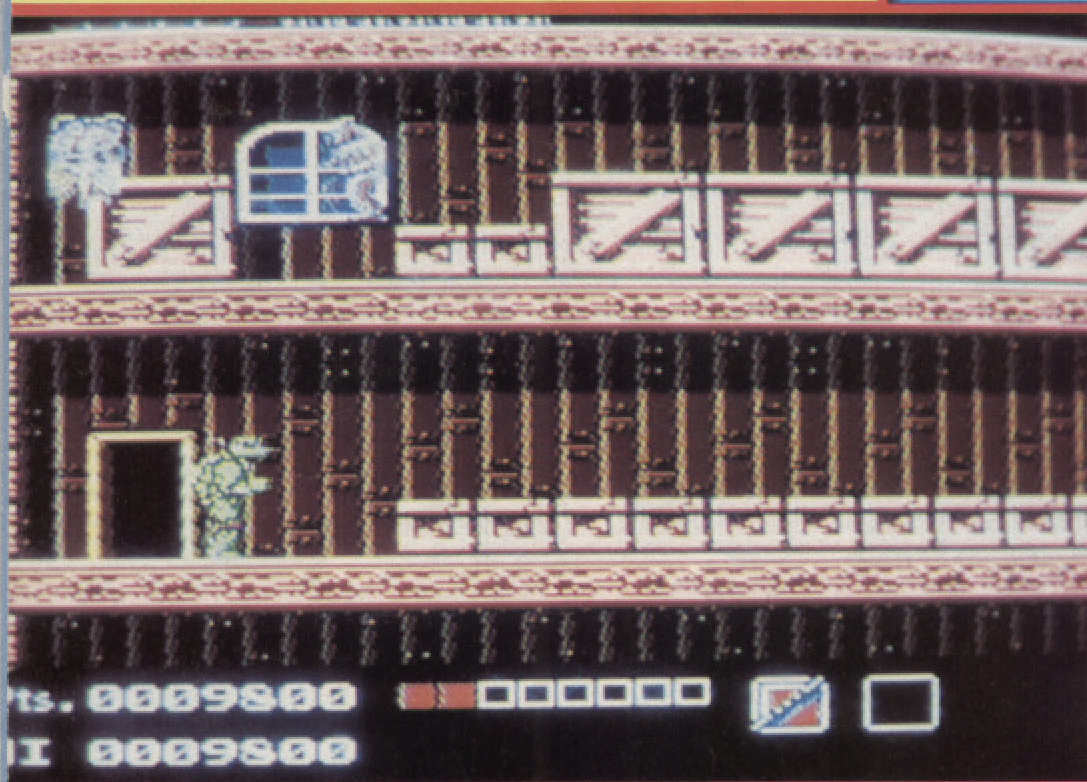
The game is split into two sections. The first of these is an overhead four-way scrolling view where you guide a Hero between sewers and buildings, avoiding Clan soldiers and Roller Cars as you go. Once inside a structure the game changes to a side-on view as you progress in platform-style areas fighting off the multitude of baddies that appear.

Any Turtle may be chosen to begin with, but if his Life Meter is reduced to zero he's captured, forcing you to select a new combatant. Captured Turtles may be rescued, and this has the effect of giving you another life.

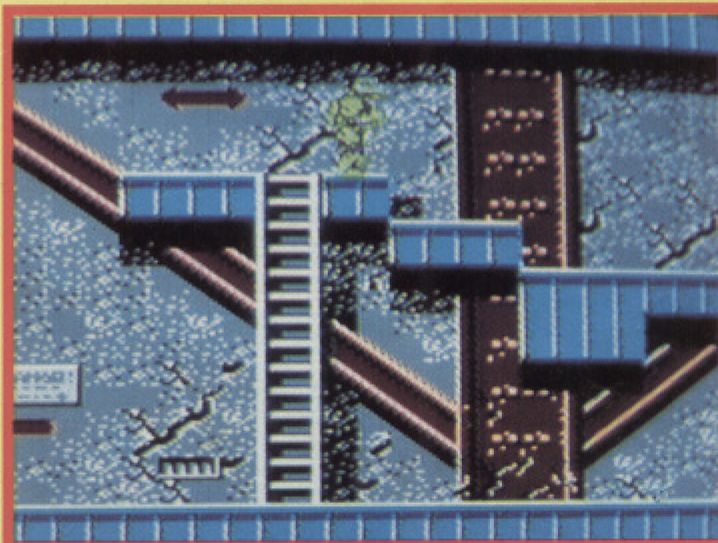
Extra energy is gained by collecting pizza slices, and additional weapons and ropes to climb with can be picked up by defeating your foes. Underwater scenes must be completed within the time limit or you drown - turtles breathe air, not water!

▼ *Who are these dudes?*





▲ *Watch out for those bad guys up top.*



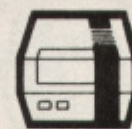
▲ *Climb the ladder to reach higher levels.*

TURTLEMANIA

Will this craze ever reach a peak? It all started in the early 1980's, when two men - Laird and Eastman - decided to make a comic that parodied the current trend of young superheroes whose powers were a result of a genetic fluke (such as the X-Men and The New Mutants). It became surprisingly popular, and the merchandising began to roll out. Now, not only is there a cartoon and soon-to-be-released film, but also action figures, beachballs, mugs, lunchboxes, clothes, furniture, food - you name it, it's got Turtles on it!



NINTENDO REVIEW



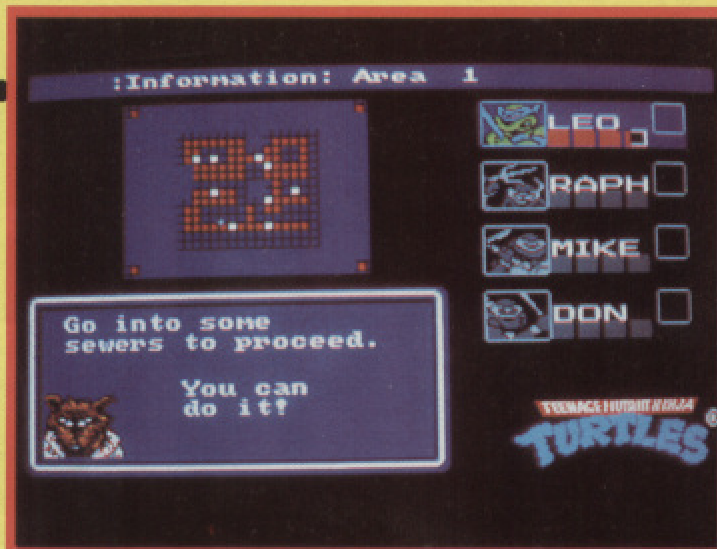
HERO

TLES®





▲ One of the many characters.



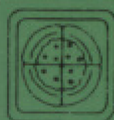
▲ Splinter offers advice to the Turtles between levels.

MUTANT PACK

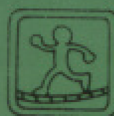
If you're a Turtles fan who's looking at buying a new console, you might be interested in the new Mutant Machine Turtle Pack. It's a special edition package that features a Nintendo console (complete with joypads etc) and free copy of the Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles game. The pack costs £79.99 - which is pretty good value for money.



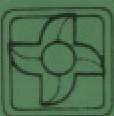
TURTLE POWER-UPS



PIZZAS: Whole or partial, they renew your Turtle power.



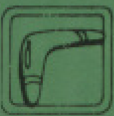
ROPE: Gets you from building to building in the later levels.



SHURIKEN: Either one or three at a time, these give you the chance to blast the baddies before they get close.



KIAI: Destroys everything in its path.

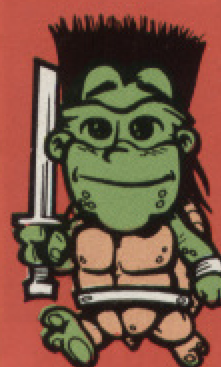


BOOMERANG: Same effect as shuriken, but if you catch it as it returns you can use it again!



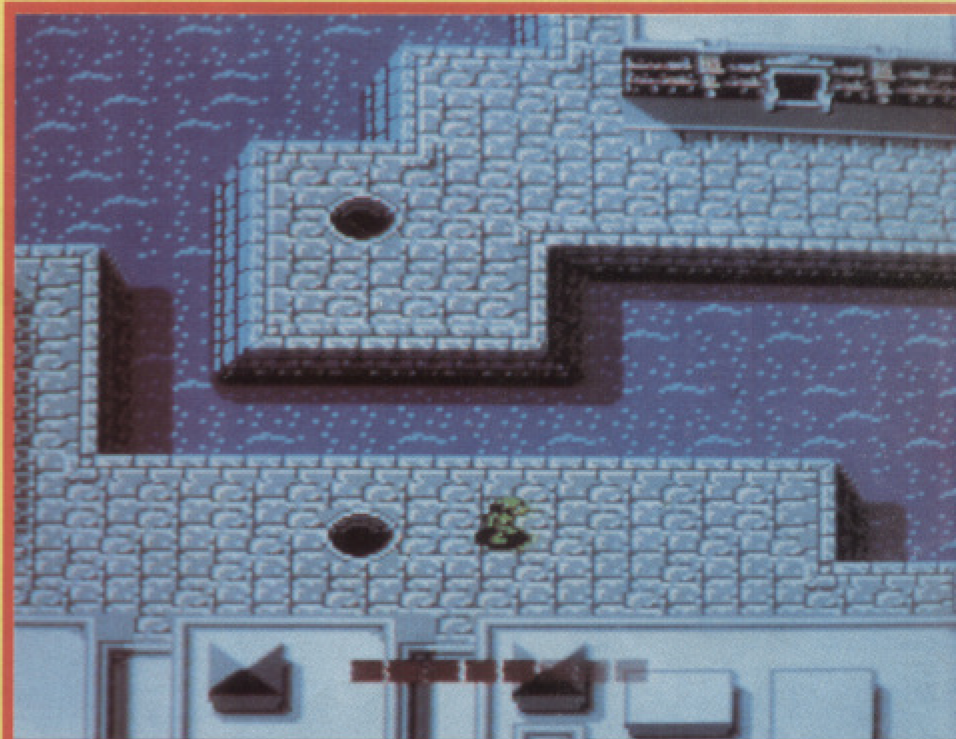
MR INVINCIBILITY: Makes you invulnerable for a short time.

COMMENT

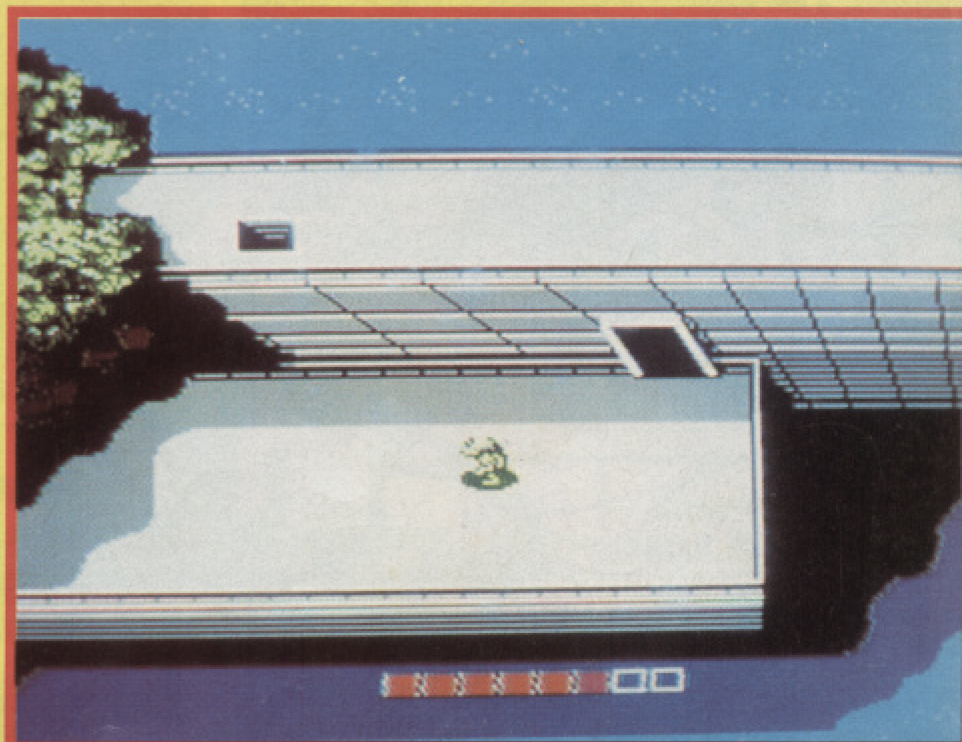


JULIAN

I was a bit disappointed to discover that this isn't a conversion of the brilliant Turtles coin-op, but once I sat down and actually played the game I soon cheered up. It's a very original and very addictive arcade adventure which requires planning and a good deal of arcade skill to battle through the sewers and kick some Foot ass without being captured. The graphics are excellent and the sound is a faithful rendition of the Turtles TV theme music (not the hit single, Turtle Power). Put it all together and you've got a totally radical game that every Turtle dude should get his mitts on - pronto!



▲ Both these pics show the overhead scrolling section where you can enter buildings and sewers.





RAPHAEL

The needle-tipped Sai is Raphael's preferred attack tool. The speed and grace of his strikes are what he prides himself on.



MICHELANGELO

Compared to his comrades, Mikie's power is only average. Enemies around his feet usually fall prey to his nunchukus onslaught, and his courage will amaze you.



LEONARDO

Leonardo's primary weapon is the hair-splitting Katana blade. He's most effective when attacking sewer enemies, especially ones that lurk overhead.



DONATELLO

The dreaded Bo is Donatello's form of amusement. Don't be fooled by the fact that it looks like a simple stick, because this baby can take out enemies from both above and below.



MATT

To be honest with you I was expecting this to be a complete pile of turtle droppings. So I was pleasantly surprised to find a good game lurking behind all the hype: this is a genuinely original and interesting product. The graphics are excellent, if somewhat on the small side, and the soundtrack is fairly close to the theme music. The four amphibians come across as being different, each having it's own abilities and weak points. It's a shame the game doesn't have a two-player option. Other than that, it's a very playable game that deserves to sell by the lorryload.

THE MOVIE

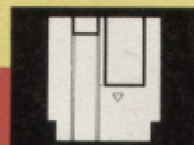
Hey dudes! This is no cartoon! The soon-to-be-released live action Turtle movie features the Turtle gang, their Master Splinter, Casey Jones and April O'Neil battling their arch enemy, the Shredder and his Foot Clan army. It's ninja-kicking mayhem all the way as the heroes try and stop the crime wave that's sweeping New York - no prizes as to guessing who's behind all this evil! Julian saw the film when he was in the USA earlier this year and reckons it's brilliant - so watch out for it at a cinema near you at the beginning of December!





BY: NINTENDO
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED
LIVES: 4
CONTINUES: 2
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: OK







PRESENTATION 89%

Film-like sequences start the game, and Splinter dishes out advice.

GRAPHICS 84%

The Turtles are brilliantly animated, and the backgrounds are superb.

SOUND 88%

Gets your toes tapping from the start!

PLAYABILITY 90%

You'll find this tastier than fresh pizza - it grabs you and doesn't let go.

LASTABILITY 87%

It's unlikely that you will finish this in a hurry.

OVERALL 90%

Bodacious stuff! Definitely worth shelling out for!

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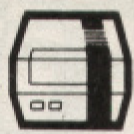




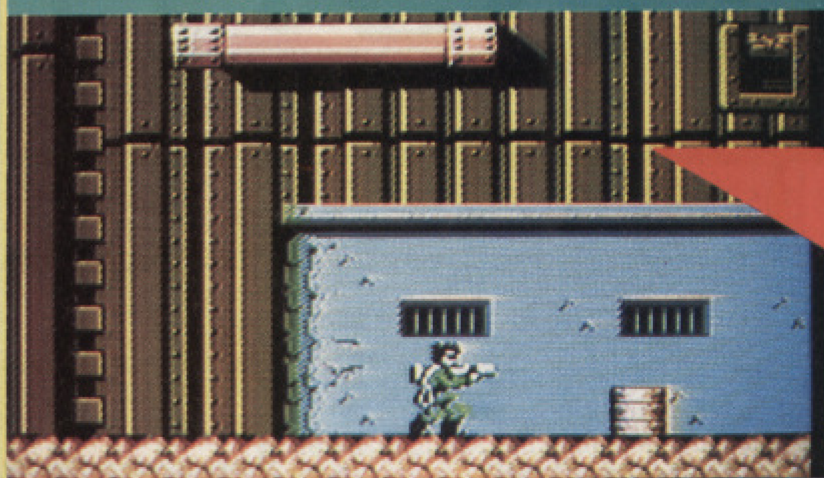
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BIONIC COMMANDO



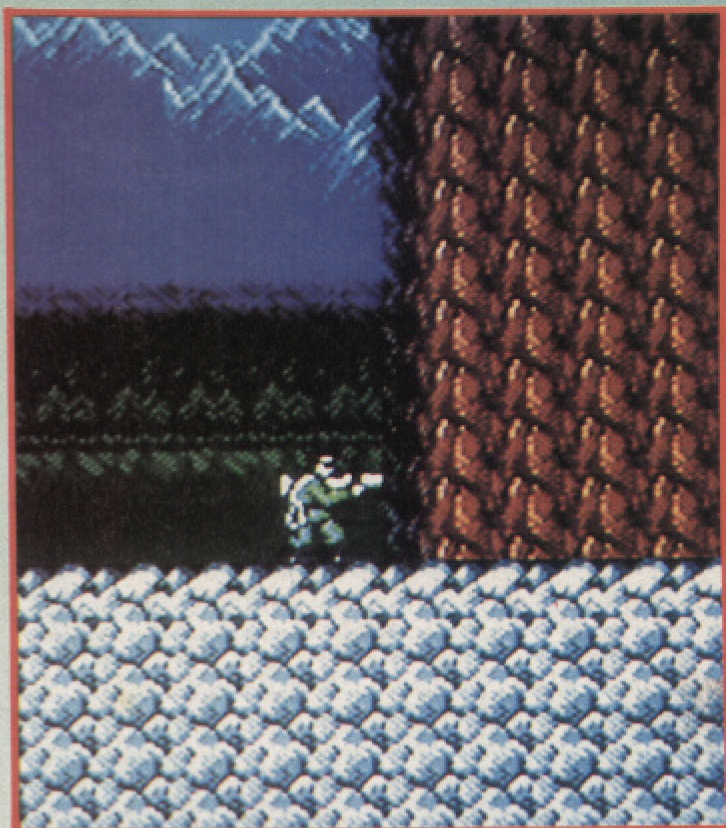
Super Joe Crack, the star of Commando (Capcom's arcade hit of yesteryear) has been captured behind enemy lines! For a mission too tough for even a veteran warrior, you need to send in a superior soldier. Enter the Bionic Commando - a cyborg so menacing he can make any enemy's trousers turn a nasty shade of brown...

Not surprisingly, it's you that takes control of the mechanised mercenary, who must travel into hostile territory dealing out vast quantities of death and destruction (what else?), as well as contacting undercover agents on the way to rescuing Super Joe.

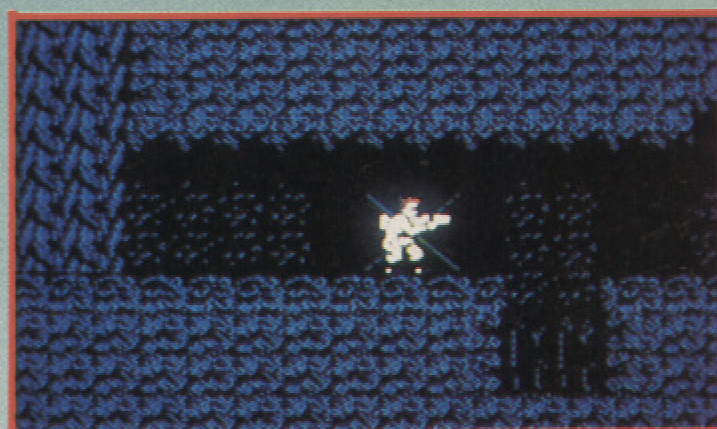
The digital mayhem is displayed via an eight way scrolling landscape - mainly consisting of some very nice scenery and platforms. There's loads of enemy troops on the look out for marauding commandos - and all of them are crack shots with their zap guns. Add to that the inhospitable territory and the sheer vastness of the enemy's bases and installations, and the chance of success are not very good at all.

Nintendo Bionic Commando differs from the coin-op original in a number of ways. Although the general platform gameplay remains very similar to the original, you'll find a number of additions in this NES interpretation...



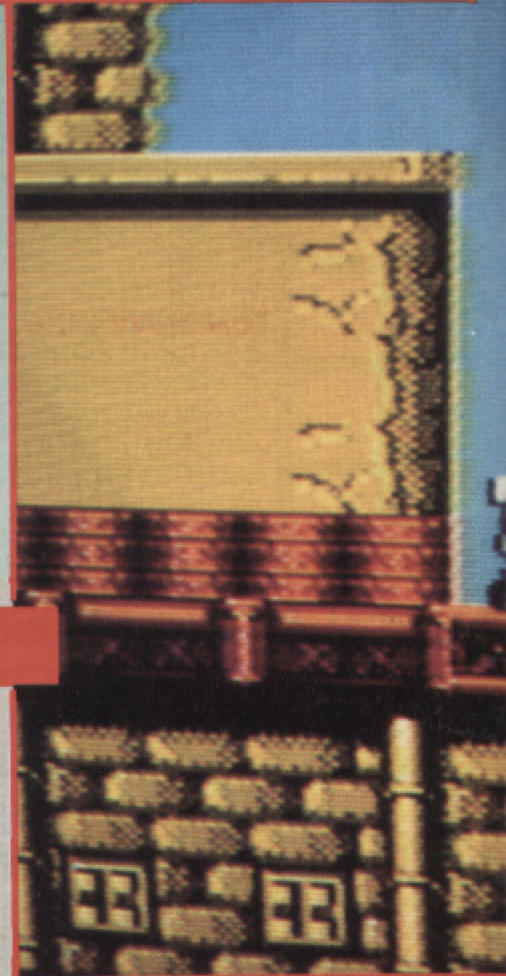


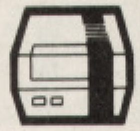
▲ *Our brave commando attempts the underground section.*



YOU NEED HANDS

Top on the list of our hero's essential kit is his Multi-Purpose Extendo-Matic Bionic Arm. It's the biz for reaching platforms that are too high to reach by foot, and it can be used for collecting any goodies that vanquished foes may care to leave behind. Another use that this mechanical wonder possesses is the ability to give enemy troops a good bionic smack in the gob!





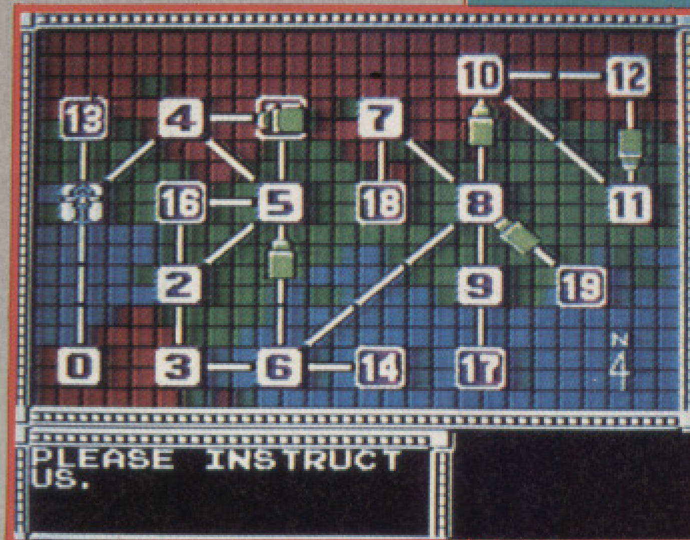
COMMENT



MATT

Arrrgghhh! What an amazingly frustrating game! You're going to need near god-like gamesplaying prowess in order just to progress past the first level! But difficulty level apart, you can't deny that Bionic Commando is great to look at, sounds groovy, and has a large, juicy dollop of playability on offer - enhanced by the superb bionic arm. You can't fault this game's depth either as there's a huge variety of levels to conquer. Unfortunately, the absurd difficulty level coupled with the lack of continues may well stop you from ever seeing the treats in store in the later levels.

STRATEGY CITY

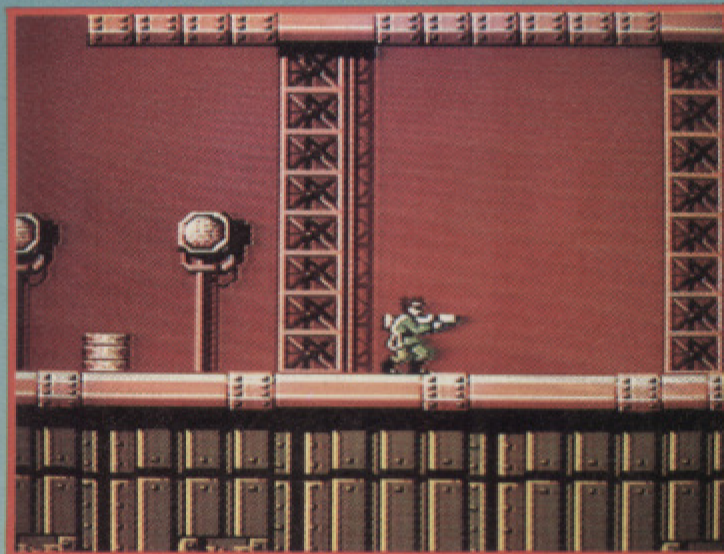


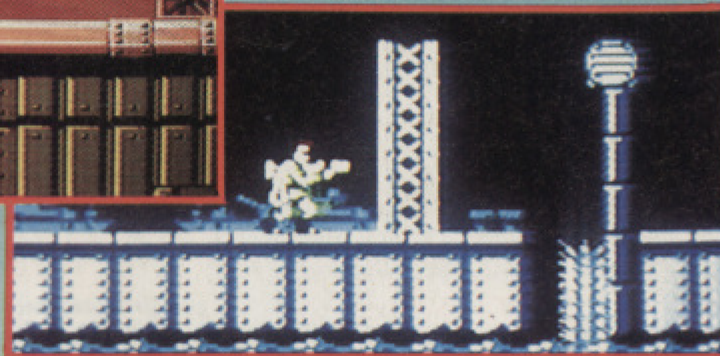
Well, here's a thing that wasn't to be found in the arcade original - a bit of strategy! On the tactical map, the Bionic Commando's progress through the zones is charted and you can keep tabs on enemy patrols - essential for planning a mission free from unnecessary entanglements.

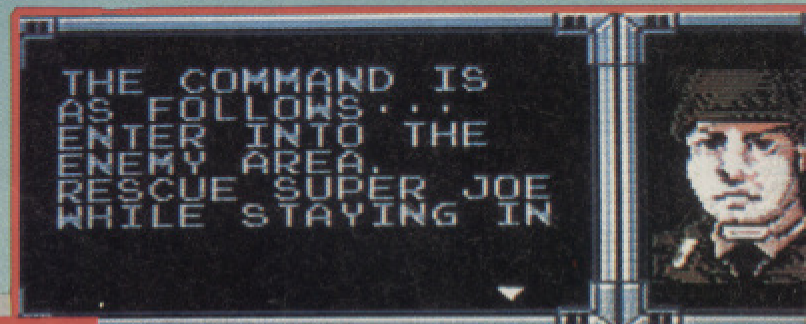
PATROLLING PRANKS

Select a destination on the tactical map occupied by an enemy patrol and you instantly find yourself in a solo raid situation. Travel up the vertically scrolling screen Ikari Warriors style, blasting all and sundry in order to progress.



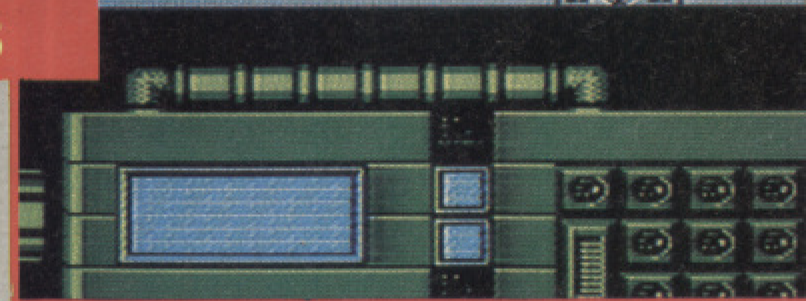






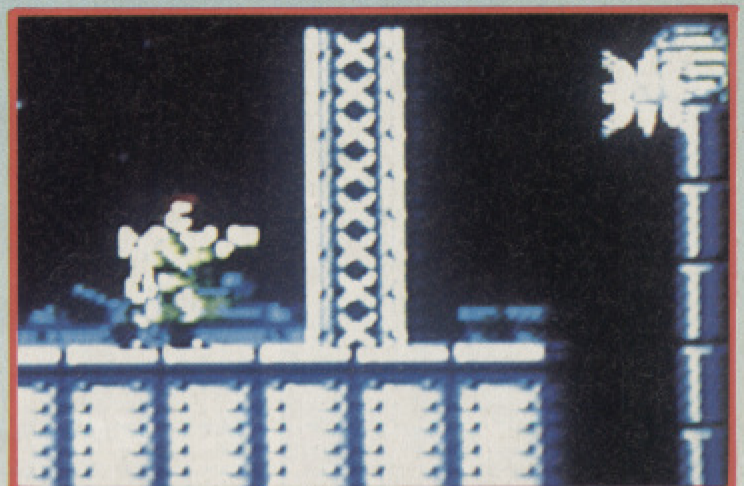
SECRET AGENT ANTICS

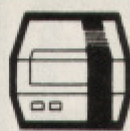
Plenty of clues on locations of weapon dumps and even information on the captive Super Joe Crack can be revealed by contacting undercover agents in the Communications Rooms. You can also patch into enemy comms and see what dastardly plans they've got lined up for you...

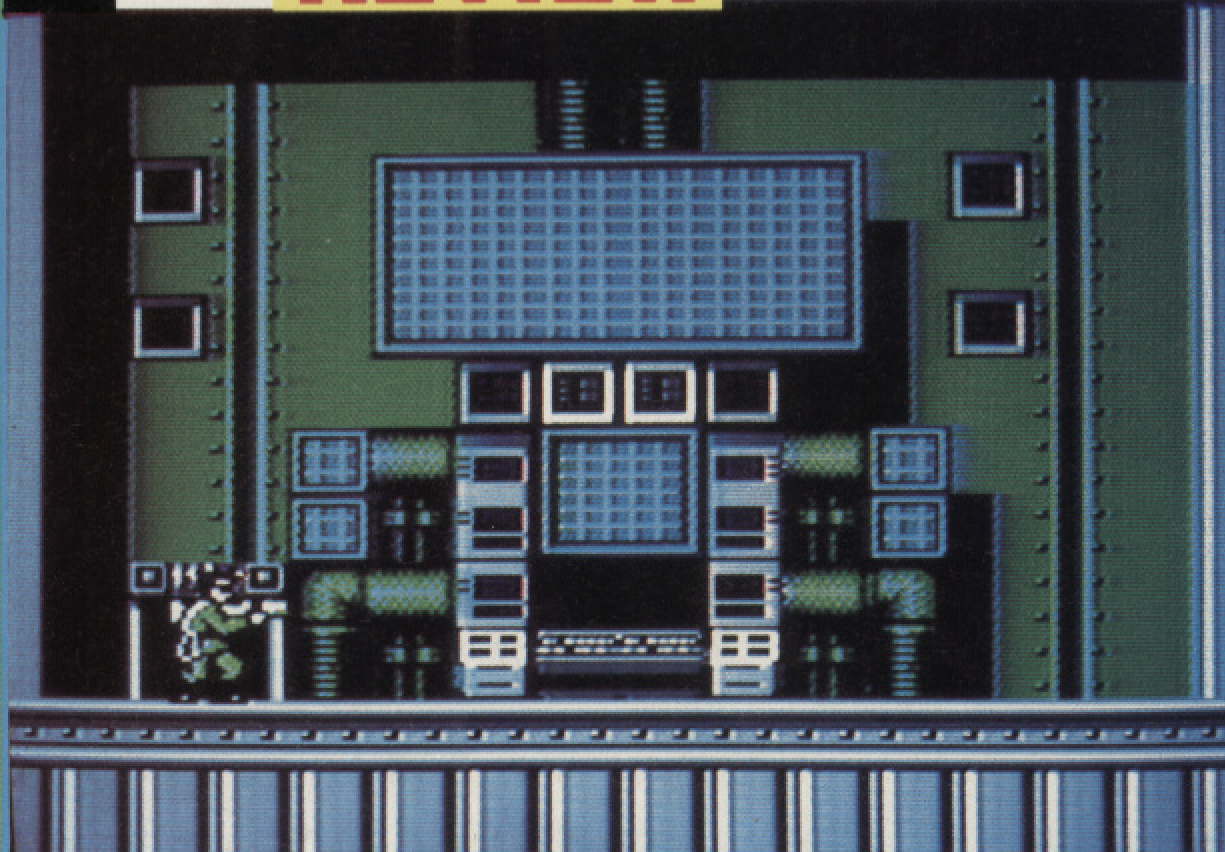


BIONIC COIN-OP CAPERS

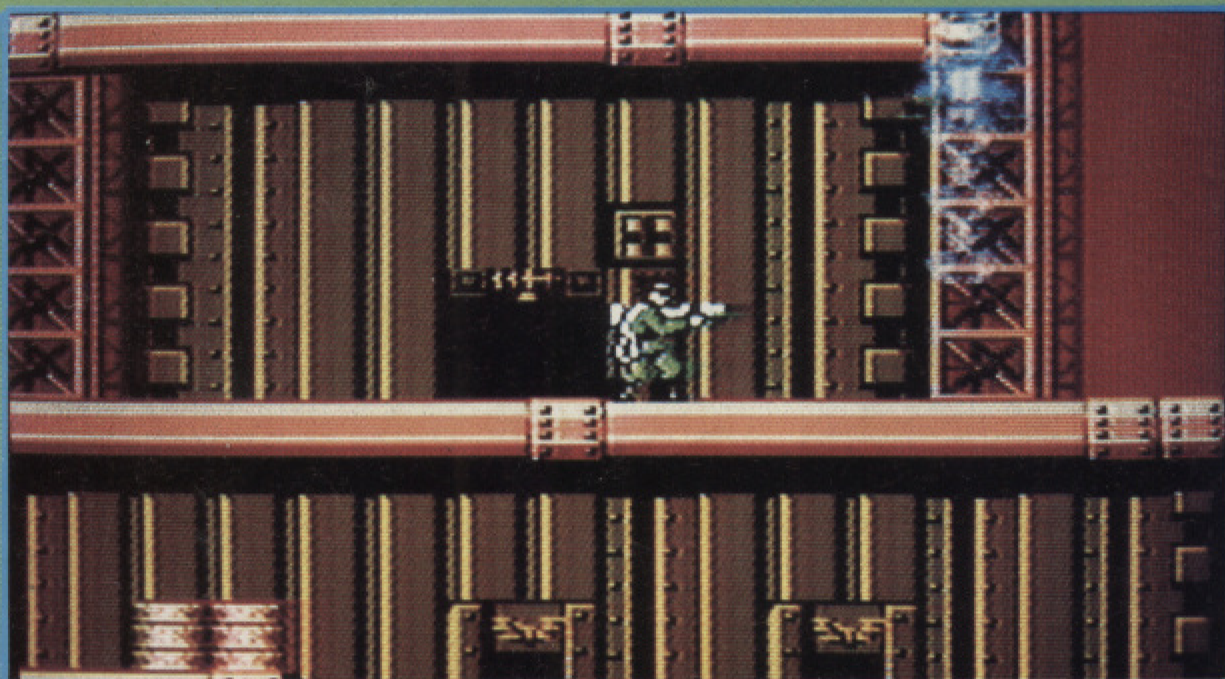
Capcom's Bionic Commandos didn't exactly set the arcade world on fire when it was released way back in 1987 - mainly because it was so difficult to find a machine to play on! Still, the coin-op provided arcadesters with five very tough levels of bionic platform excitement - much like the game reviewed here, but lacking the strategy screens and the Ikari Warriors-style raid section. But what it did have was simultaneous two-player bionic thrills - thus the slightly different title. Check it out for rarity value alone if ever you should meet the machine on your arcade travels.



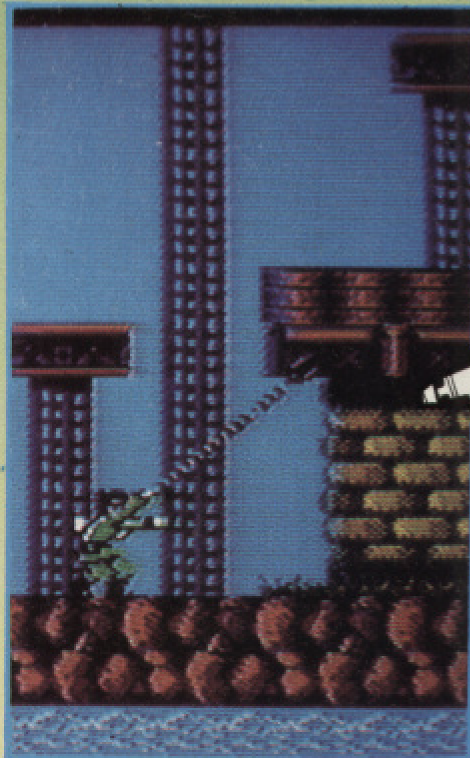




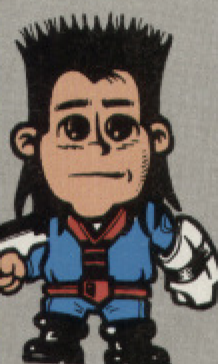
▲ In the control room you can access the computer.



▲ Helicopters attempt to blow you away on the later levels.



COMMENT



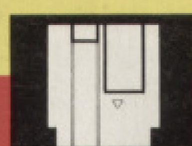
JULIAN

Wow! Here's a game to get your teeth into! Bionic Commando is tough from the start, and within minutes you're screaming your head off and hurling the joypad around with frustration (well, I was)! However, if you can rise to the challenge, the game has plenty on offer - the combination of arcade action coupled with a bit of strategy works very well indeed, and the bionic arm adds a whole new dimension to the gameplay. I must say that even though it's tough, Bionic Commando is an addictive and enjoyable game with plenty of lasting appeal - try it out if you're after a real challenge.



BY: CAPCOM
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD







PRESENTATION 86%

Plenty of slick presentation screens and a decent, polished feel to the game itself.

GRAPHICS 83%

Good sprites and smooth scrolling compliment the varied backdrops.

SOUND 79%

Nice tunes and effects similar to the coin-op original.

PLAYABILITY 80%

A marvellous bionic arm to play with, but the extreme difficulty puts a dampener on the proceedings.

LASTABILITY 81%

A huge amount of levels to be beaten in this one.

OVERALL 81%

Difficult, but still an entertaining platform romp - essential for platforms 'n' ladders fiends.

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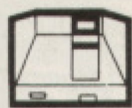
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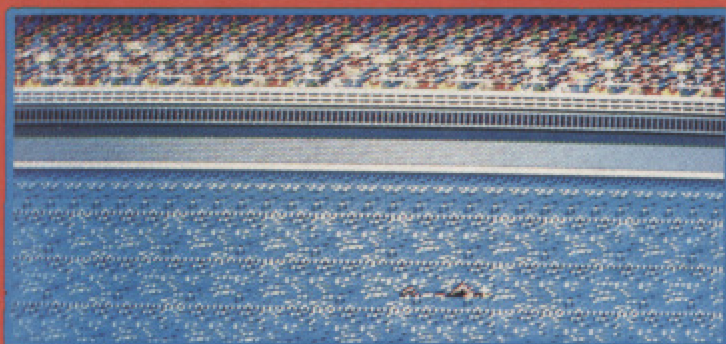


It's time once more to put on those Linford Christie skin tight running shorts and your Nike trainers, and show the world your athletic prowess in this Sega conversion of the ancient Epyx multi-event joypad-bashing sports simulation.

Summer Games features five events: the 100m dash, the pole vault, gymnastics, 100m freestyle swimming and the high dive. Each can be completed in turn, or can be played separately. Points are awarded for performance, with the medals being dished out for first, second or third place.

The competition is tough, and with one to eight players being able to participate, you've got your work cut out to grab a medal. But with hard work and lots of training, you too could become one of the great pentathaletes of the gaming world.





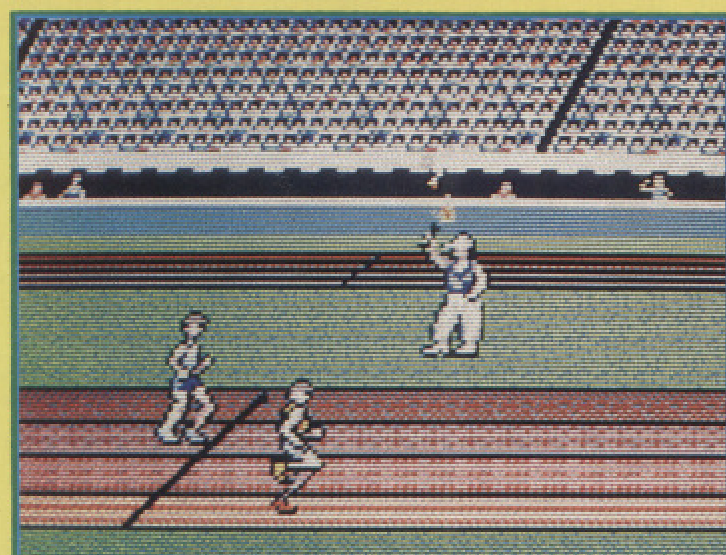
Freestyle - but where's the competition?



You've made a slow start, but keep pumping the buttons to catch up!

THE EPYX EPICS

Summer Games was originally released for the Commodore 64 and Atari 8 bit computers way back in 1984. The game was very successful, and Winter Games, World Games, Summer Games II, World Games, California Games, and The Games: Summer and Winter Editions were released on home computer. So far only Summer Games, California and World Games have been released on the Sega - but maybe the rest wiii follow. We'll keep you posted.

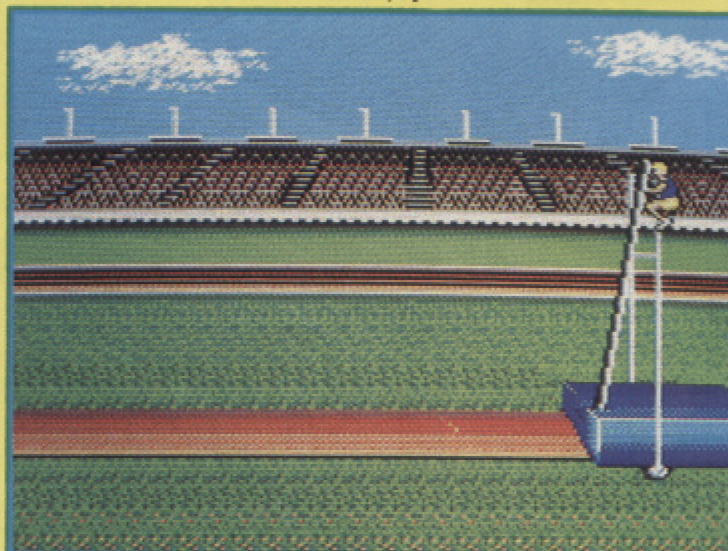


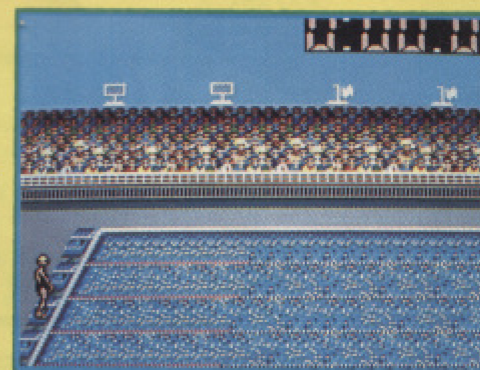
THE 100m DASH

This pits you directly against a computer or human opponent, and requires plenty of fast, rhythmic fire button bashing to ensure maximum speed.

THE POLE VAULT

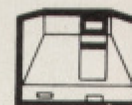
Tricky one, this. Once you have started running, you have to gauge correctly where you have to drop the end of the pole in order to flip yourself over the bar.

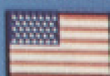




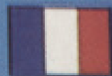
100m FREESTYLE SWIMMING

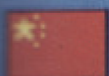
Just a case of pressing the pad to throw yourself into the pool, then bashing the fire buttons for all you're worth. At the 50m mark, your swimmer flips over, ready for the return to the start.













COMMENT



I'm a huge fan of California Games, and had high hopes for the rest of the Games series. However, World Games was just average, and things have taken a turn for the worse with Summer Games - it's terrible. The graphics are small and have little detail, and the backdrops are bland beyond belief - surely there was scope for some amazing animation here. The gameplay is very dull, most events requiring simple button-bashing to succeed, and those that don't are easily mastered. Even if you're a big fan of sports simulations, you'll more than likely find this very disappointing.

JULIAN

COMMENT

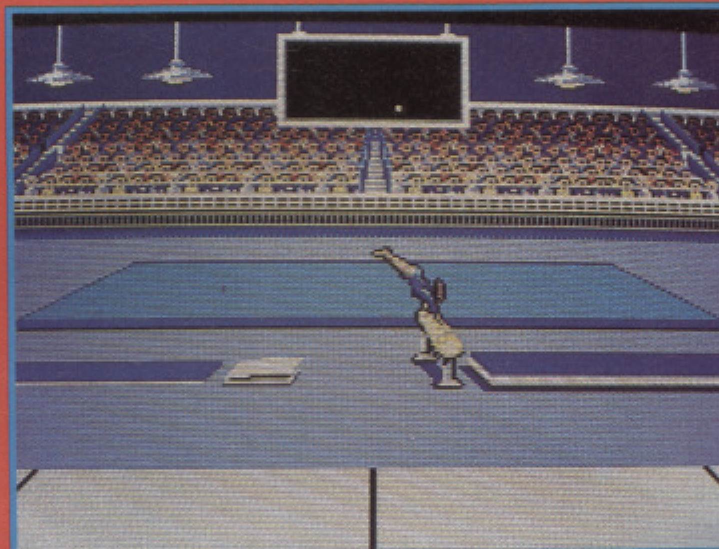


Unfortunately, as far as the Sega is concerned, the Games series has gone on the decline. Starting with the excellent California Games (which still ranks as one of the best Sega games ever), and the rather ordinary World Games, and now continuing with this, which, I'm sad to say, is the worst of the three. Small, blocky and somewhat deformed sprites jerk around plain and boring backdrops to the sound of flat, totally inappropriate tunes, altogether crushing any thoughts of taking part in the next Olympics. With only five events, the interest is held for the first few minutes, and not even enhanced with more than one player. Even if you're desperate for a Track and Field game for the Sega, steer well clear of this.

MATT



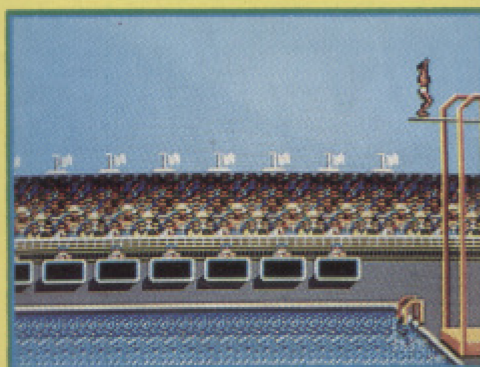
You're going for gold!

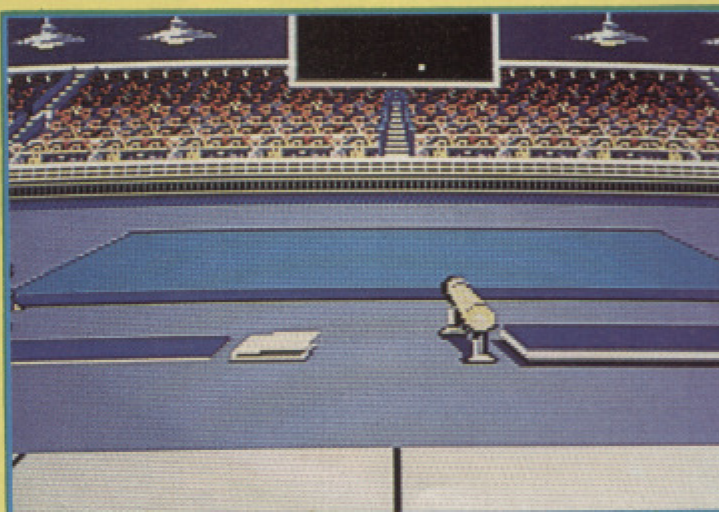


Make sure you land upright to get points.

THE HIGH DIVE

This is split into four separate parts; the forward dive, the back dive, the inverse dive, and the back inverse dive. You've simply got to do as many somersaults as possible and enter the water straight to ensure maximum points.





GYMNASTICS

Simply press the button to start you running, then press the button to vault from the springboard onto the horse. Then flip yourself over to land upright on the mat.

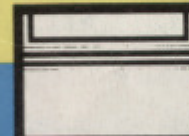
EPYX® SUMMER GAMES®

PUSH START BUTTON

©1984 EPYX.INC.
ADAPTATION GAME ©SEGA 1988

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: VERY EASY
LIVES: N/A
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: SLUGGISH

1-8 PLAYERS




PRESENTATION 82%
Up to eight players can play, and there are practice and compete options.

GRAPHICS 49%
Blocky, plain, ill-proportioned and badly animated sprites, and dull lifeless scenery.

SOUND 54%
Ugh! Bland tunes that are completely inappropriate to the sports theme.

PLAYABILITY 43%
Easy enough to play, but gets very boring extremely quickly even playing with more than one player.

LASTABILITY 40%
It's so easy, the game becomes boring very quickly indeed.

OVERALL 41%
Poor graphics and dull gameplay makes Summer Games a bummer game.

PREVIEW

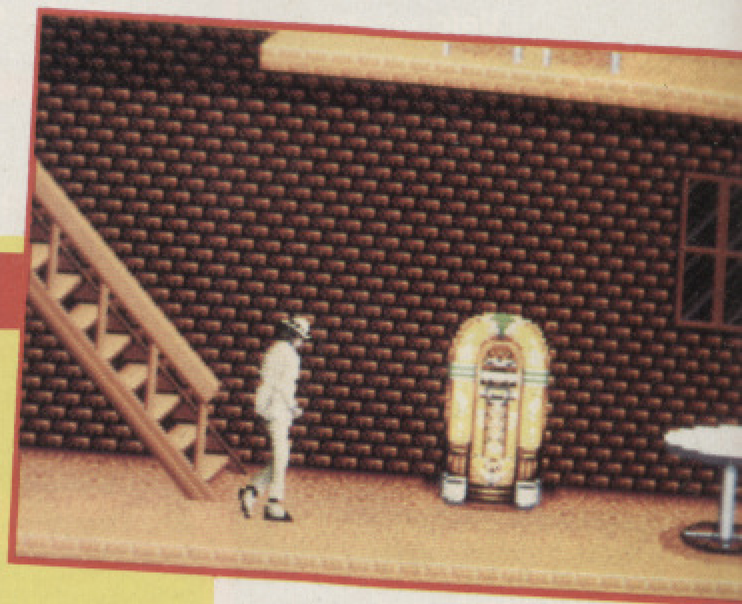
MOONWALKER

Moonwalker is the officially licensed game of the film, and features "Whacko" Jacko himself and all his top toons as he tackles the marauding hordes of Mr Big and rescues his kidnapped kiddie chums.

The action is platform-based, with levels set in a seedy nightclub, city streets, graveyards, underground caverns, and the enemy base. Each level is split into three sub-levels and Michael must travel through these locations searching for his friends while fighting off the goons of Mr Big by kicking, punching and using special Jackson magic.

Animals play a part in this unsurprisingly "whacko" game - dogs attack you constantly on the second level, black cats leap out of windows at you, and even Bubbles (Michael's pet chimp) appears in order to guide you to each end-of-level showdown!

As well as the soundtrack, the game features animated sequences from the film, such as Michael converting himself into a car and a plane, and also sampled ooohs, aaows and even snatches of speech! This game is one to look out for - expect a full review as soon as it's released.



OOOOOH!

The game starts with Michael entering the club and, as in the film, casually flicking a coin across the room into the jukebox. This not only starts the music off but also triggers all the thugs and loose women to start attacking the plastic pop star! They can't like his music much...

UUUUUH!

Each level features a Michael Jackson soundtrack - the complete track list is: Smooth Criminal, Beat It, Another Part of Me, Billie Jean and Bad.



AAOW!

The most amusing sections of the game occur every time you complete a sub-level. Mr Big appears, cackles insanely, then leaves you to fight off hordes of baddies. If Michael has enough magic left, he can use it all to spectacular effect - pressing the button down for a few seconds makes all the baddies line up with Michael and dance along with him (this is especially funny when they are dogs) and are all killed off at the end of the sequence with a smart-bomb style AAOW!!!

MEGADRIVE



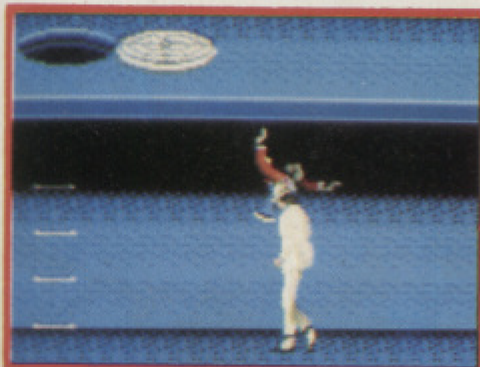


NWALKER

▼ *When Mr Big appears, keep away - you can't hurt him, but he can hurt you!*



▼ *Bubbles will show you the way to the showdown, so pay attention to his arm movements*



▼ *Watch out for the pool hustlers - they can do a lot of damage to you!*



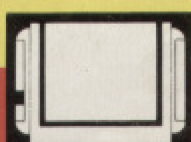
MICHAEL JACKSON'S MOONWALKER™

BY: SEGA

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE DATE: NEXT YEAR
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED
LIVES: 5
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: QUICK











REVIEW

GHOULS 'N GHOSTS

Brave Sir Arthur the Knight is back, once again searching for his girlfriend who has been kidnapped by Lucifer!

The mission of mercy is set over five scrolling levels, starting in the graveyard, then moving to hell desert, up a castle's battlements, down through icy underground caverns and finally inside a castle dungeon.

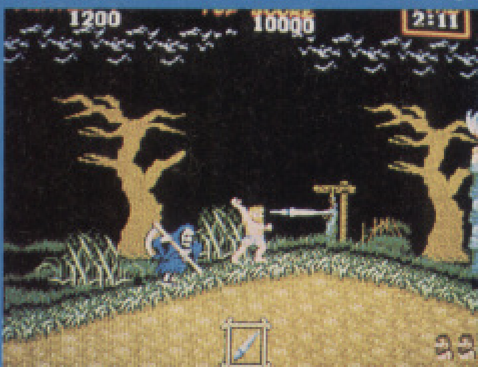
Our hero can run and jump and is initially armed with a lance that can be thrown left, right, up or down - but it's best to throw it in the direction of the nearest baddie. These horrors come in a multitude of shapes and sizes: vultures and skeletons are among the first to be encountered, and later worms and even Cerberus (the mythical three-headed dog) bar your progress.

Being hit results in you losing your armour, meaning that you must go on in your undies - another hit means death. Some thingies, like the Venus flytraps, kill you automatically, but either way death comes quickly and frequently.

The end of level guardians are huge and deadly and must be shot repeatedly to finish them off. Needless to say, they don't just stand there while you attack, but unleash various forms of attacks to be avoided! It's a tough game. But did anyone say it would be easy?

THE WEAPONS

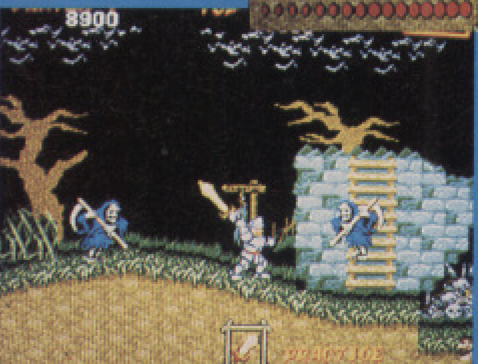
There are a variety of weapons to pick up. You start with lances, which are pretty useful. Daggers are good too. Disks are great for killing things on the ground, and the axe is better for aerial targets.



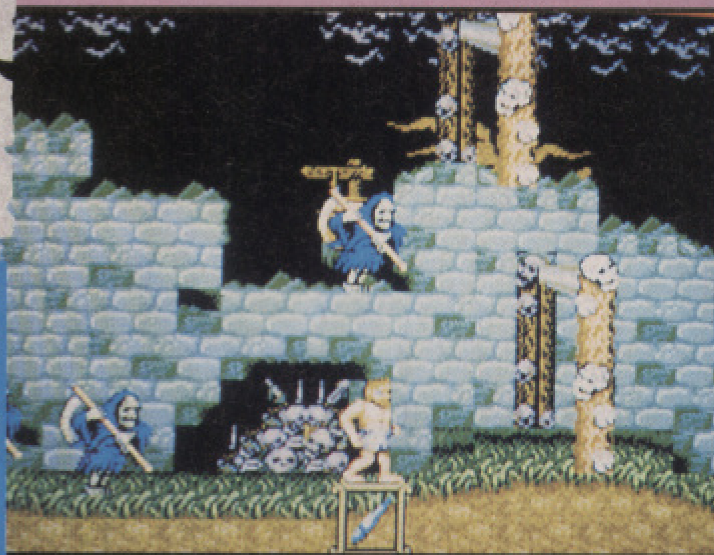
◀ The lance, your first weapon.



Axes deal death to most baddies! ▶



Sword - not very powerful. Try not to pick it up. ◀

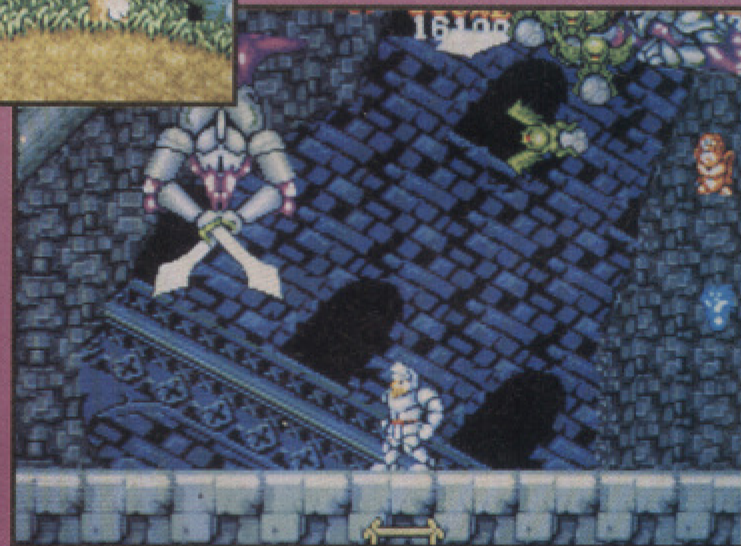


▲ Timing's needed to pass the guillotine.



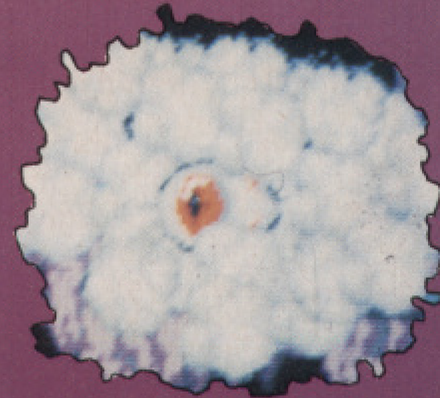
▲ Fireballs must be avoided!

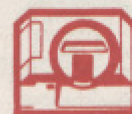




▲ His sword's bigger, so watch it!







No escaping those turtles!

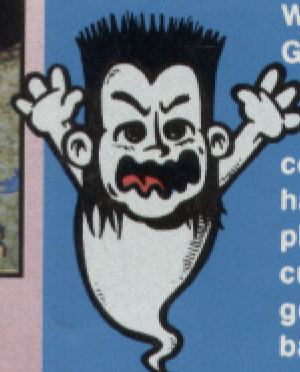


This devil hurls skulls at you.





COMMENT



JULIAN

What a stunner! Not only does Ghouls 'n' Ghosts have some of the best graphics and sound you're likely to see and hear on a console game, it's also one of the hardest games you're likely to play. But even though it'll have you cursing with frustration, it's so good you just keep on coming back for more. The game is packed with surprises - the giant end-of-level guardians are all highly original, the spooky soundtracks are superb, the sound effects are excellent and some of the baddie sprites are incredible. Add this all together and you've got a game that you really shouldn't miss.

POWER-UP

There are chests littered around the landscape - break them open and see what's inside! Sometimes it's an evil magician who turns you into a duck or old man if you're not careful. Sometimes it's an extra weapon or new armour. But if you're really lucky, there's golden armour inside. Grab this and you get a super weapon. Simply hold down the fire button for a few seconds to unleash massive power!

You have the power! Your first magic weapon.



The golden armour waits to be grabbed.



Unleash super power to get rid of those Ghosts!



The magic suit mirrors your actions - two way shots!



REVIEW



The magician's spell must be dodged, as the effects are rather drastic....



WALK LIKE A MAN, QUACK LIKE A DUCK

One of the most amusing parts of the game is when something happens to the Knight. Losing your armour means running about in your Y-fronts - not very safe when hordes of undead are after you! Worse still is being turned into an old man, who hobbles around with a walking stick until the magician's spell wears off: try running fast like that! Becoming a duck is also rather humiliating - and dangerous too! You can't shoot, so you must simply avoid enemies until you become human again - which isn't easy!



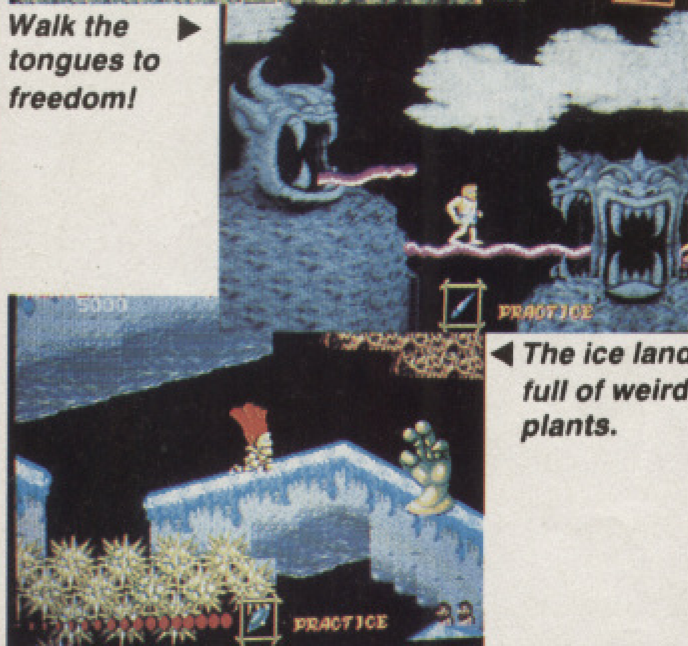
....you might become a Disney reject!

ROOM WITH A VIEW



A ruined, blasted land.

Walk the tongues to freedom!



The ice land, full of weird plants.

COMMENT



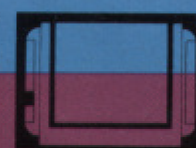
MATT

What a brilliant game! The graphics are wonderful, and the sound is great. My only qualm with the game is its difficulty - it's very hard, and I think some people will have trouble with it. It's worth persevering though, as they don't come much better than this. I particularly like all the little touches that make the game so enjoyable, such as the array of weapons and foes. When the hurricane starts blowing, running becomes harder - an excellent visual effect. Although there are only five levels, each one is graphically unique - you really want to see the next level! Do yourself a favour - buy this game now.

GHOULS 'N GHOSTS

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: QUICK







PRESENTATION 85%
The options screen has the usual Megadrive sound test, and there are various game options.

GRAPHICS 89%
Superb backgrounds and the main sprite is excellent. A visual treat!

SOUND 92%
Excellent tunes and fabulous sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 94%
Very tough, yet it's so addictive and playable that you won't stop.

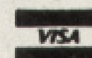
LASTABILITY 89%
You ain't gonna finish this in a hurry! So much fun to play it should be illegal.

OVERALL 92%
A perfect conversion. Whether you're a fan of the coin-op or not, don't miss this.

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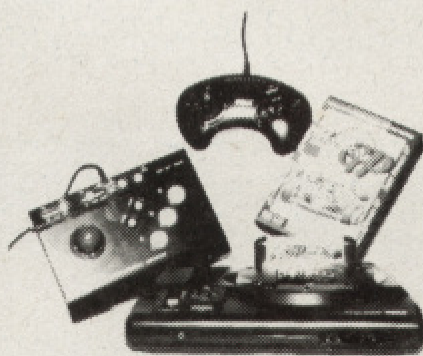
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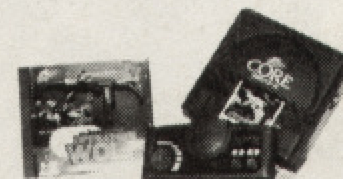
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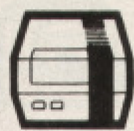
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Oh no! Your girlfriend has just been mercilessly machine-gunned down by a gang of villains. There's only one thing to do - call your friend and go and avenge her death.

This sequel to the Tecnos coin-op includes all the features of the original Double Dragon - the heroes can punch, jump, do spin kicks and even get their enemies in a strangle-hold - but the landscape is far bigger and there are far more baddies to bash. These guys come in an array of forms and some carry weapons, including knives, shuriken, chains, and bats. One particular female duo leaves a bomb that is capable of blowing you right off the screen!

End of level guardians block the way at regular intervals, and it's up to you to discover the method to dispose of them. And once you've beaten them all you can take on the gang leader and get revenge...

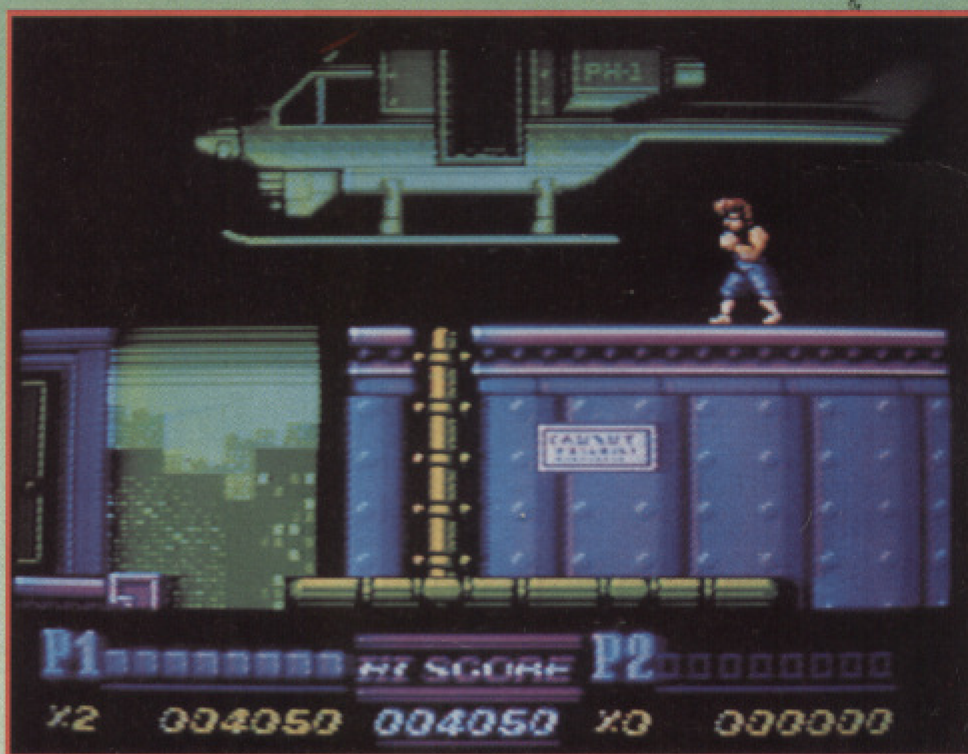


DOUBLE

BIFF!!!



▲ *The first end-of-level baddie.*



The helicopter approaches at the end of the rooftop section. ▲

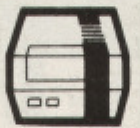
WEAPONS



The weapons can be grabbed to make life a lot easier for a short while. Knives can be thrown, so you don't have to get too close to your opponents, and baseball bats let you simply walk up to someone and start smashing. The most fun is to be had with the lethal-looking chain - swing this a few times and most enemies lie down and die. Unfortunately the weapons disappear as soon as their previous owners do.

LOOK BEFORE YOU HIT!

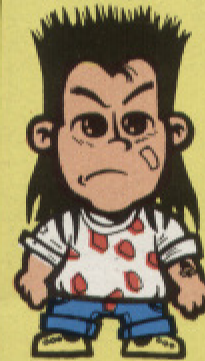
Double Dragon II has a two-player mode where both vigilantes travel across the landscape as a team. This is very useful for dealing with large gangs of bad guys - but watch you don't hit your friend in the melee, as both players are capable of hurting one another!



▲ These muscled ladies leap down from the chopper: try and punch them before they land!

E DRAGON

COMMENT

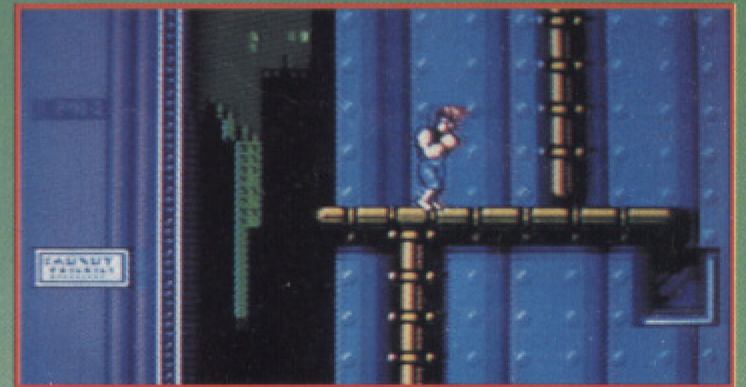


JULIAN

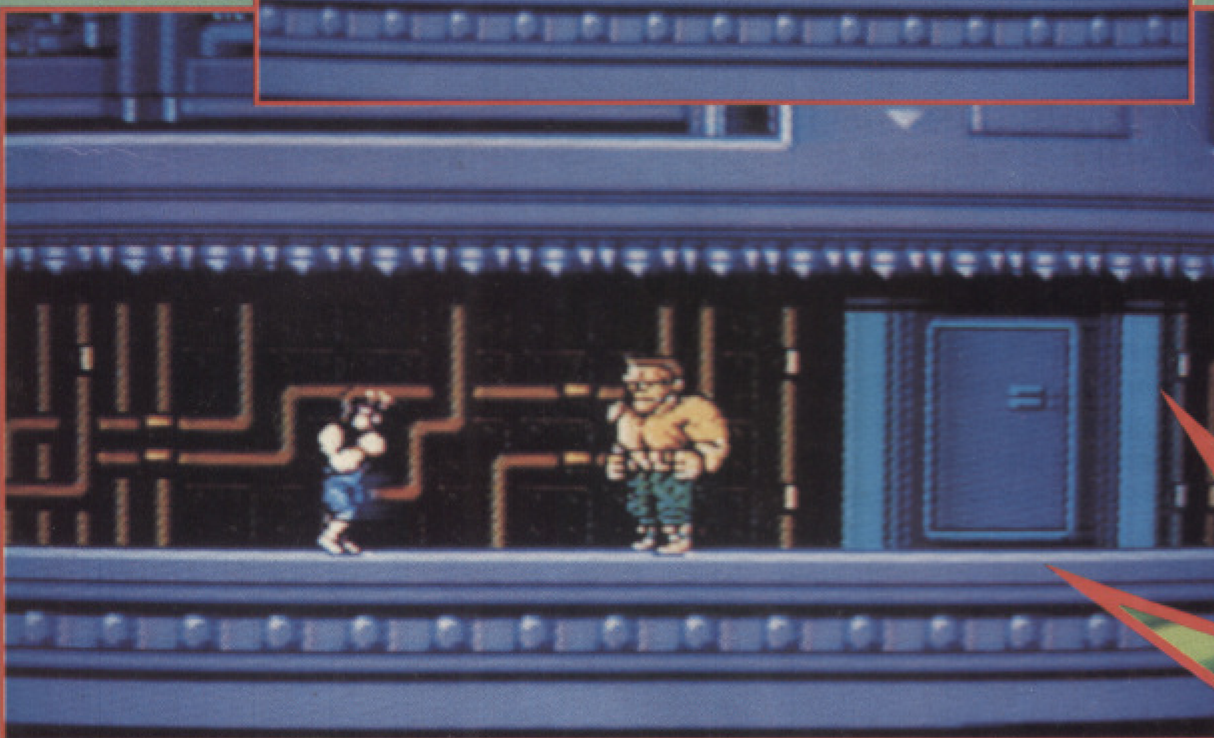
Although Double Dragon II looks a bit rough around the edges - the scrolling is jerky and the sprites flicker when things get busy - it's great fun to play. The multitude of baddies to bash and the sheer variety of backdrops and weapons make this one stand head and shoulders above most Nintendo beat 'em ups. The two-player mode is where the game really comes into its own - acting as a team with a friend is thoroughly enjoyable and very rewarding. But even with a single player, Double Dragon is a highly entertaining game. If you've already got Double Dragon, I'd think twice before buying this as it's very similar to the original. If you haven't got it though, check it out.



This baddie leaps around, but a few roundhouse kicks will shut him up. ▼

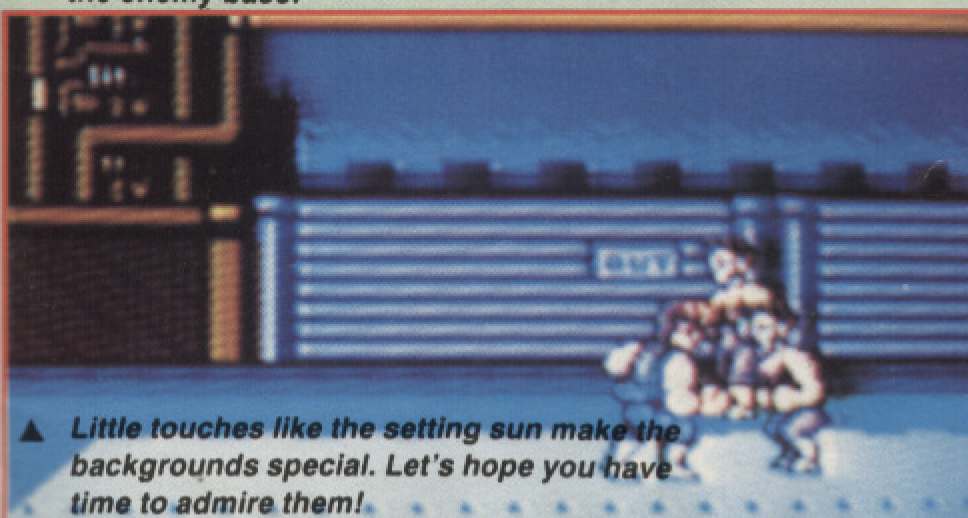


▲ Ladders and pipes can be climbed to gain access to rooftops - but falling off is lethal.

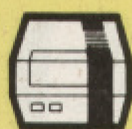


▲ After coming down the lift, things get heavy in the enemy base!





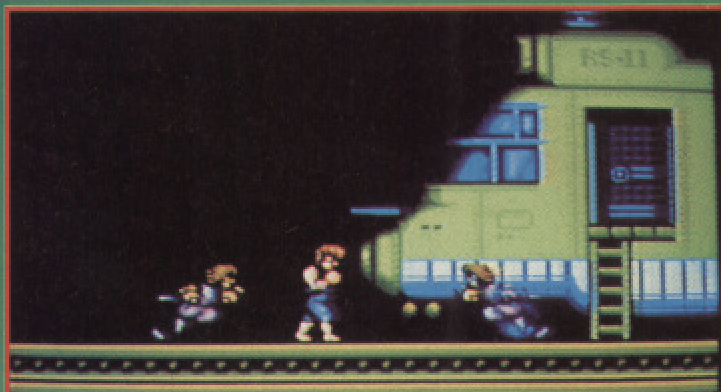
▲ Little touches like the setting sun make the backgrounds special. Let's hope you have time to admire them!

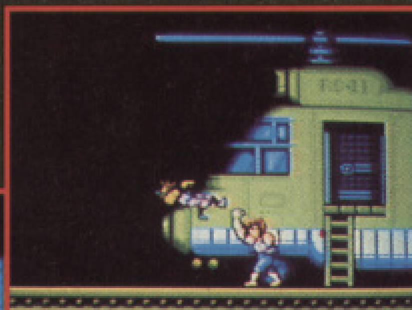


CHOPPER SQUAD

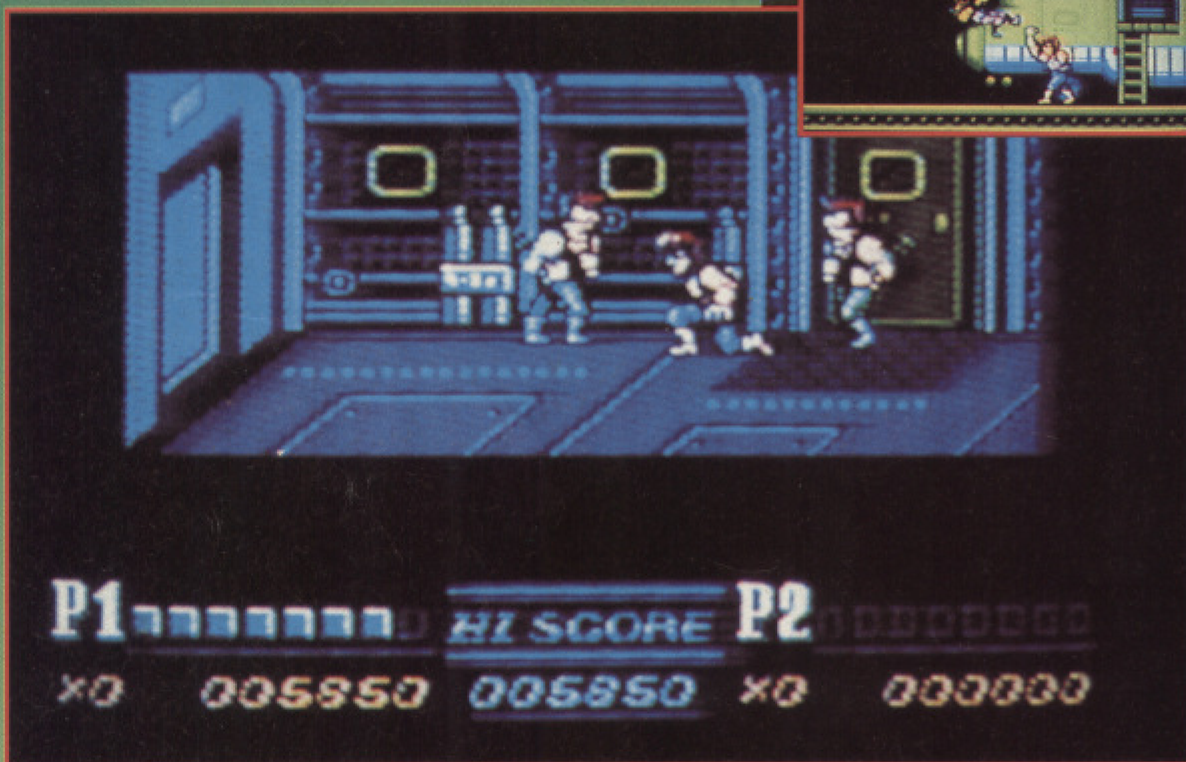
The game includes a sequence aboard a helicopter where quick action is required to avoid being sucked out and falling to your doom. This is just one of the many dangers you have to face as you avenge the death of your girl.

▼ The last two to be pulped.





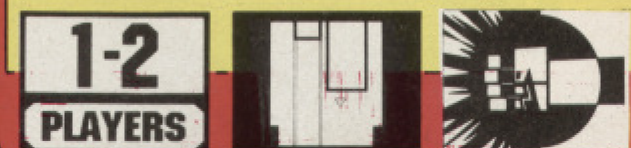
▶ He won't be getting up after that uppercut!



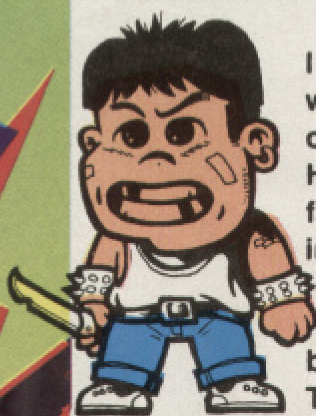
▲ Keep away from the door on the right - it opens at random intervals!

ACCLAIM ENTERTAINMENT, INC PRESENTS DOUBLE DRAGON II The Revenge™

BY: NINTENDO
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GREAT



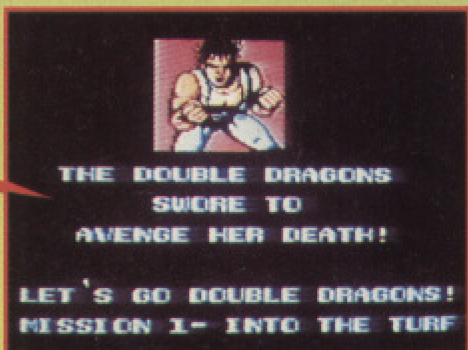
COMMENT



MATT

I found Double Dragon II good fun, with plenty of interesting opponents and fast action. However it is very similar to the first Double Dragon and gives the impression of just following straight from the latter. The scrolling is often poor and flickery but the sprites are well animated. There's no doubt that this game will sell by the lorryload, and why not - it's a great game that deserves to do well, and will keep you coming back even when you've finished it. Well worth a look at least.

POW



▲ Keep taking those steroids!

PRESENTATION 87%
Two-player mode and good in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 79%
Jerky scrolling and flickery sprites, but good backdrops.

SOUND 78%
Reasonable tunes and effects.

PLAYABILITY 86%
It doesn't take long to master the controls, and once you have it's fun all the way.

LASTABILITY 77%
Loads of levels to conquer and plenty of gang members to bash.

OVERALL 80%
If you haven't got the original game, Double Dragon II is highly recommended.



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2 OVERTON DRIVE, WANSTEAD, LONDON E11 2NJ





Ever wanted to ride in a motorcycle Grand Prix? This game allows you to experience all your biking dreams, as you take part in a variety of races around the world in this rip-roaring conversion of Sega's bike racing coin-op.

There are two modes of play, both of which have a simple objective - be the first past the finishing post. As well as racing against other riders, you also race against the clock. Between the starting and finishing posts on each track are a series of checkpoints, which you must pass before the time limit runs out. Failure to pass the checkpoint means the end of the race - race past it, though, and extra time is added so you can continue onwards towards the checkered flag.

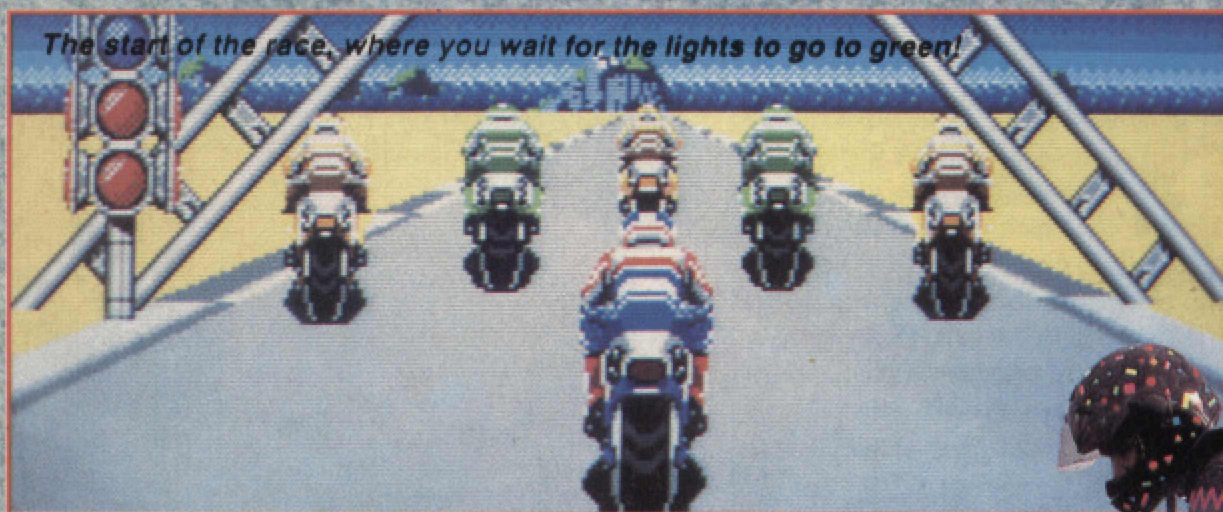
At the end of a race all the time remaining is converted into bonus points, and your overall race time is displayed for posterity - see if you can break the record!



Each continent relates to a skill level - how good do you think you are?



Overtaking on the inside is harder - but safer.



The start of the race, where you wait for the lights to go to green!

ORIGINAL MODE

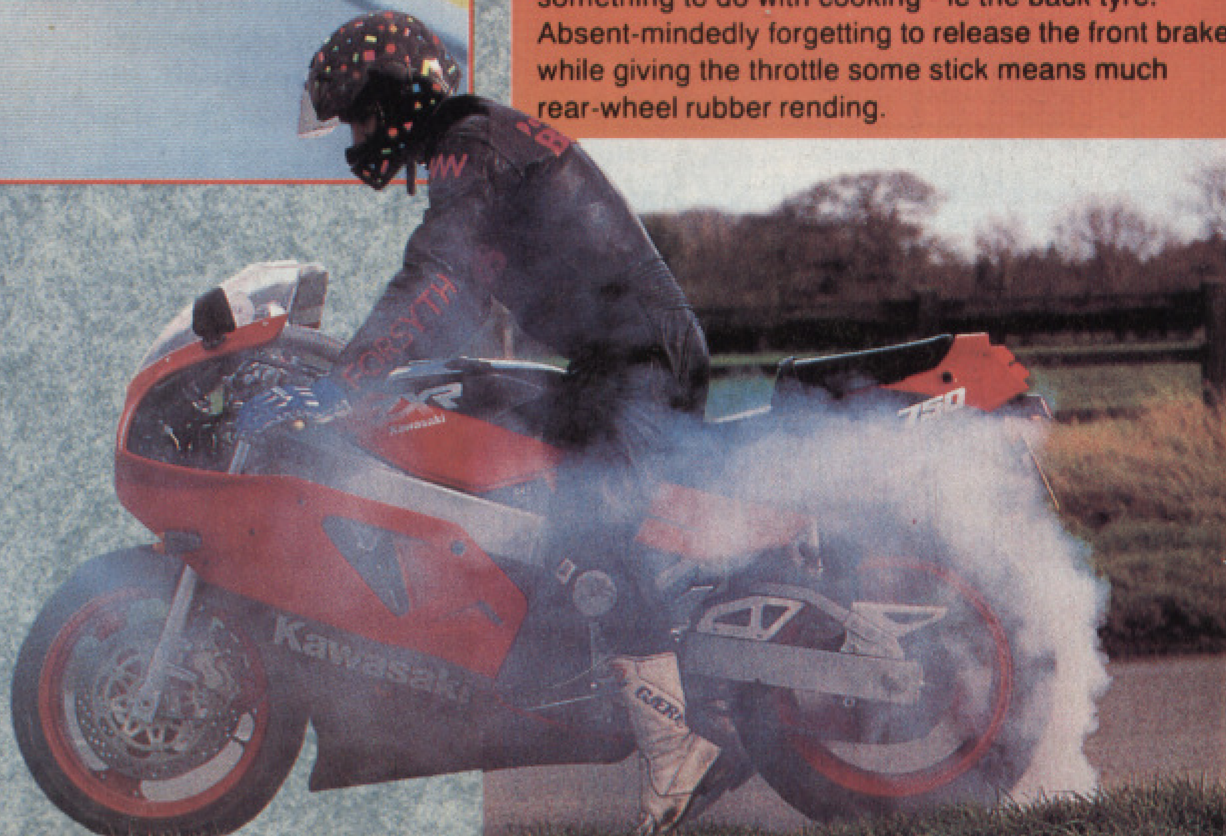
The original mode is an ongoing challenge where you race against a series of opponents over a variety of tracks. When you start, the tracks are short, the opponents are rubbish and the bike is very slow and unresponsive. However, if you win a race you're awarded money with which you can buy extra bits for your bike like turbos, brakes and chassis to make it go faster and handle better. As you progress, the opponents get better and better, and the courses get more and more challenging - so you have to make sure you keep winning to keep your bike in a competitive state!

OOPS!

Three things that you really shouldn't do on a real bike 'cos they're dangerous and naughty.

WHEELIE: Whizzz! A too-quickly yanked throttle results in the front wheel rising majestically from the tarmac while the bike travels forward at speed.

BURNIE: Phee-oo! Not a restaurant, but it does have something to do with cooking - ie the back tyre. Absent-mindedly forgetting to release the front brake while giving the throttle some stick means much rear-wheel rubber rending.







The start of the New York race.



In arcade mode you must reach the checkpoint within the time limit in order to



COMMENT



JULIAN

Ah! This is what I like! The chance to ride a very high-powered bike up a twisting road at unbelievable speeds. The graphics are tremendous, with a perfectly convincing road (complete with gut-churning hills) and excellent sprites giving a true feeling of high speed. The sound is also good, with four racing tunes to set the pace. The arcade mode is as accurate a copy of the coin-op as you could wish for, and there's the additional bonus of the original mode (which would be a good game in its own right) which adds plenty of lasting appeal. Super Hang-On is one of my favourite Megadrive games - if you're into speed, race off and buy it now!

STOPPIE: Yikes! Applying only the front brake at speed could well mean the rear wheel lifting off the deck. Do it at top speed and the rider can be ejected from his seat to land on his helmet (oo-er) some considerable distance away.

CHEERS TO PERFORMANCE BIKES FOR LETTING US USE THESE PICS

Braking at hard corners is a must!



ARCADE MODE

On the title screen there are two game modes to choose from - arcade and original. Arcade mode is a straight conversion of the coin-op, and, like the original machine, gives you four tracks to race on: beginner, junior, senior and expert. Each track is progressively longer, and is also more twisting - the real challenge is trying to win the expert race. That takes some doing!



REVIEW



Make sure you reach top speed on the straights.



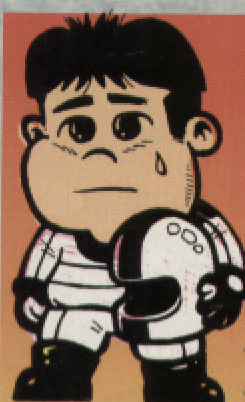
Going down in the desert - you'll have bruises for weeks!



In original mode, you can kit out your hog however you like!

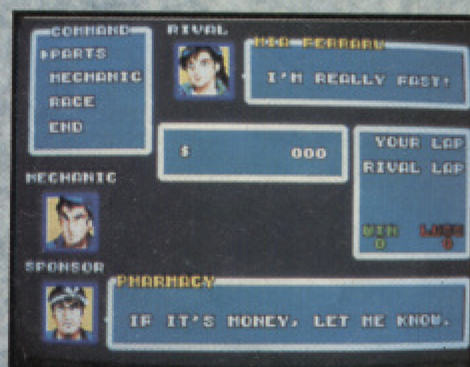


COMMENT



MATT

I'm in something of a dilemma with this game. It certainly is a great racing game, with plenty of fast action and high quality scrolling: it conveys a superb sense of speed, and all the selectable in-game tunes are catchy little ditties. The choice of game type adds a lot to the playability as the original mode gives you a feeling of planning for a season rather than a single race. Yet I feel that the game is lacking that certain something to make it an all-out winner. Still, it's a great game to play and is full of excitement and thrills - if racing's your thing, don't miss it!



Choose a rival to race against - and have the satisfaction of beating him.

GET YOUR KNEE DOWN

If you want to ride competitively, you must get used to the way the bike handles. At corners you can get your knee on the deck (check out the steam from your Supa Smoke-o-rama knee pads) and slide the bike around the bend - but don't crank the throttle back too much or the back end will slide out from under you and you'll chuck the bike down the road! Try and anticipate corners so you can lean into them, otherwise you'll end up on the wrong side of the track heading towards an advertising hording and certain doom...



SUPER HANG-ON

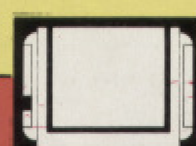
NEW GAME
PASSWORD
SEGA
© SEGA 1989

BY: SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED
LIVES: TIMER
CONTINUES: 0
SKILL LEVELS: 4
RESPONSIVENESS: BRILL







PRESENTATION 85%

Two game modes and a hidden options screen (see if you can find it)!

GRAPHICS 90%

Lovely animation on the rider, excellent roads, and the landscape zooms by at a fair lick.

SOUND 82%

Fun tunes keep you movin' on down the road, and there are plenty of screeches and engine roars.

PLAYABILITY 91%

Responsiveness is good, and you instantly get into the racing spirit.

LASTABILITY 83%

Four tracks in arcade mode, and a whole new game in the original mode will keep you racing for weeks on end.

OVERALL 86%

A very high quality racing game which is a must for speed freaks.

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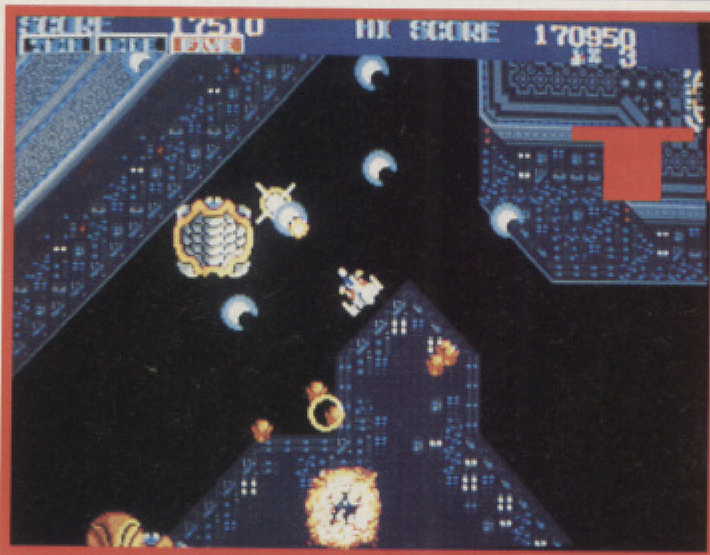
Like to win a Hundred Quid of Carts for your Gameboy!! Course you would! Just dial us on the above number and your halfway there!! Don't be Shy – Give it a Try

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THUNDER FORCE 2



▲ *The brilliant Five-Way shot in action.*

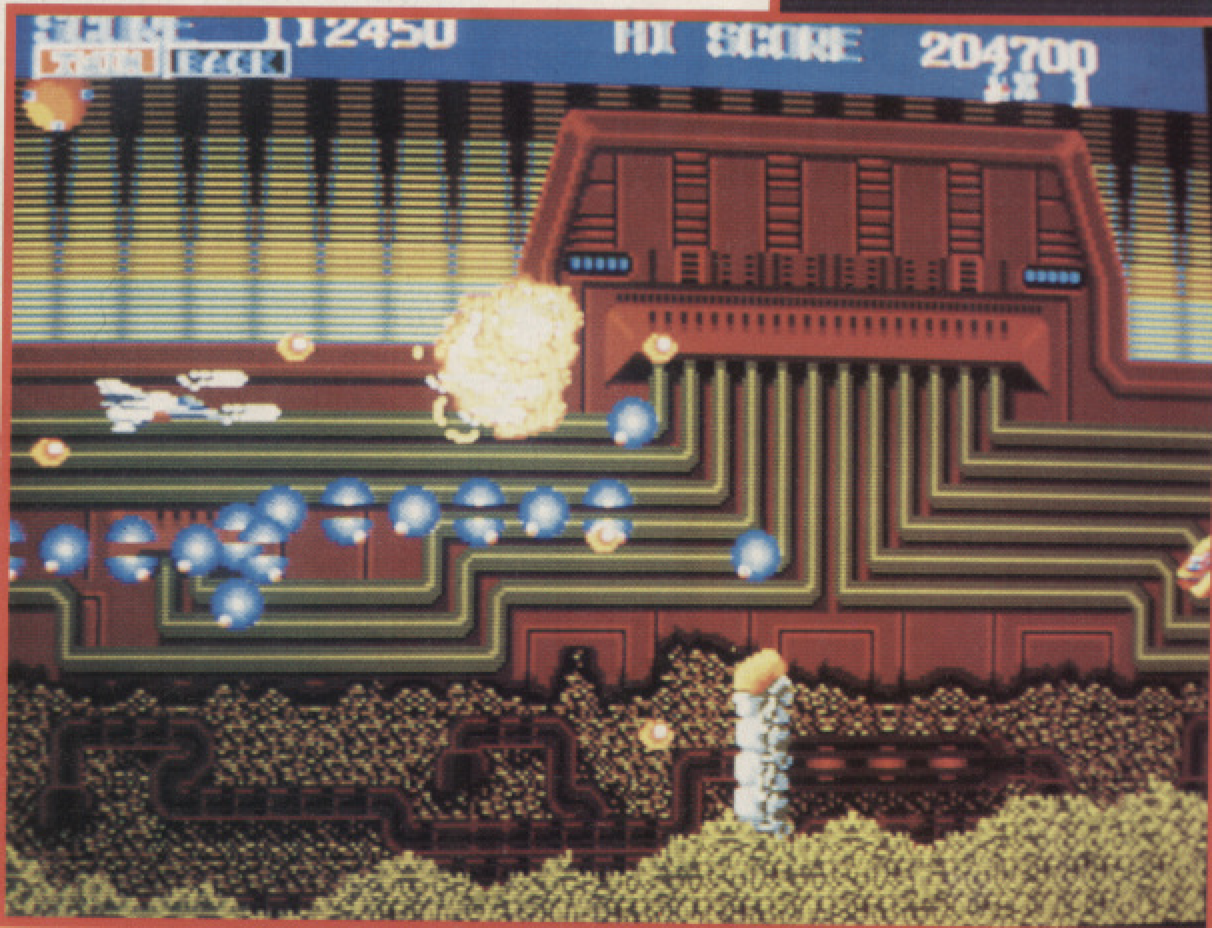
Well, guess what? Aliens are invading again, and it's up to you to stop them in your turbocharged laser death-spitting starfighter of doom. Surprise! Surprise! Surprise!

On the first level the action is viewed from above, and you have to fly around the multidirectionally scrolling screen and blast four ground installations. Naturally they're well defended, and swarms of aerial craft try and stop you in your tracks.

Neutralise the quartet of targets and you move onto the next level, a horizontally scrolling affair that's once again packed with very hostile aliens and a big guardian at the end. Once that's out of the way it's back to an overhead view, and the game continues to switch viewpoints in that order all the way through its nine levels.

Throughout the game there are a wide variety of power-ups to collect which are activated by judicious use of the A button. Drones, three-way, wide-shot, and many more give you the ability to cut great swathes through the enemy. Each weapon has its strengths and weaknesses, so careful choice is required.





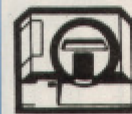
▲ *The huge tank at the end of level 2.*

◀ *Little blue nasties swarm around you - it's laser time!*

BIG blue nasties! Time to run away. ▶

TOP YOUR SCORE

Thunderforce III has plenty of secret bonuses. For example, clearing the first screen in under a minute gives you a hefty 250,000 points bonus. And on level two there's a 500,000 point bonus for... well, we're not going to tell you - but it's got absolutely nothing to do with shooting things. See if you can discover how to get it!



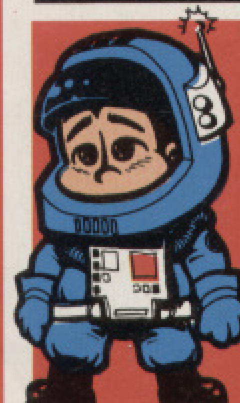
THE SEQUEL COMETH

Currently available on import, and officially available in this country next year is Thunderforce III. It carries on from this version with the addition of more powerful weapons, even meaner aliens and some of the most astonishing graphics we've seen on the Megadrive. Looking even further into the future, we've discovered that programmers Technosoft are currently working on Thunderforce IV. We'll be featuring both these games in future issues.

Shoot the engines out first, then concentrate on the ship.

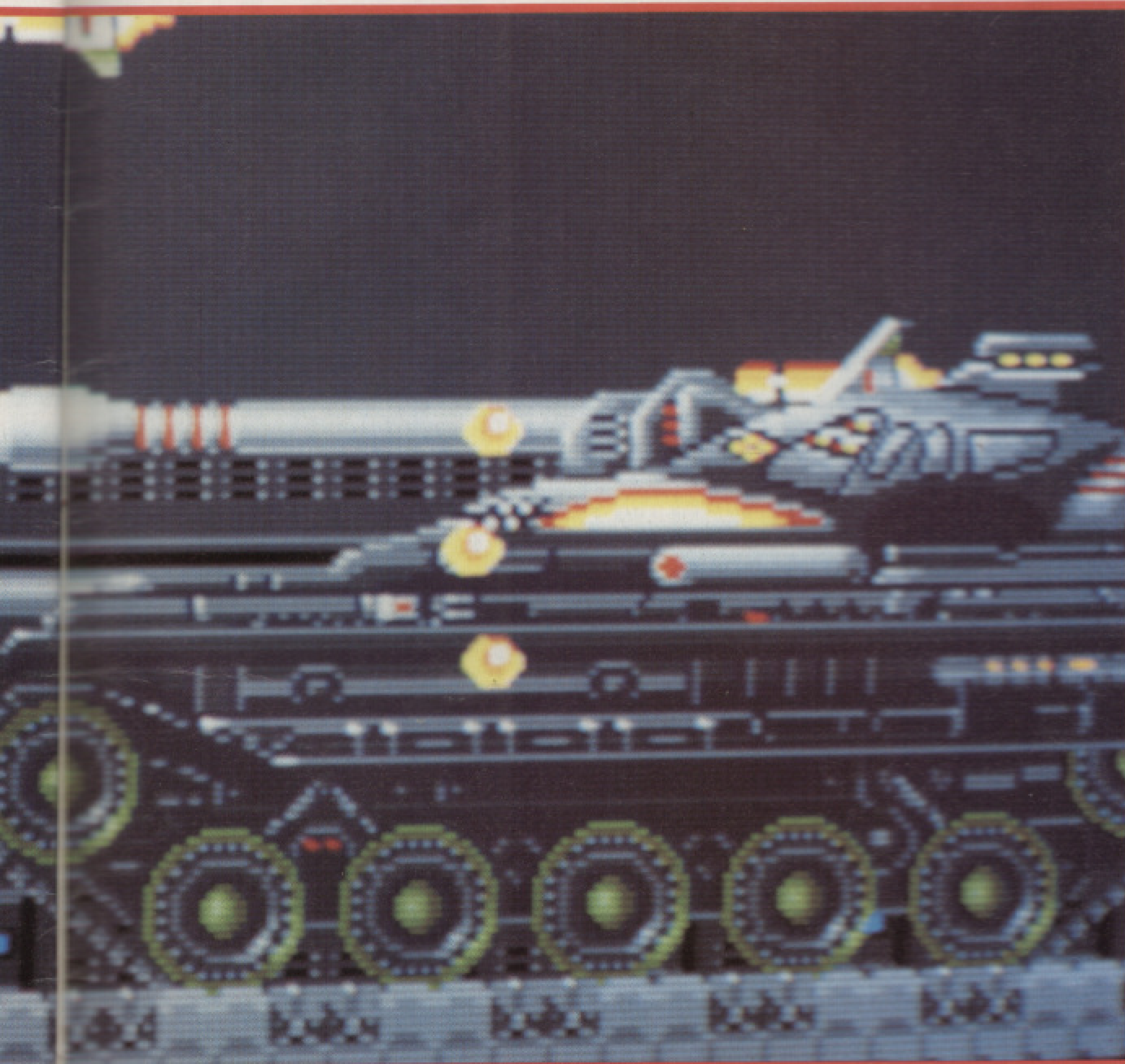


COMMENT



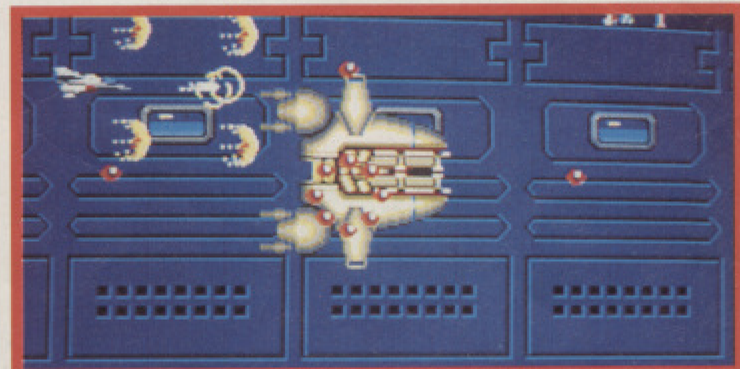
JULIAN

I'm in disagreement with Matt here, but then shoot 'em ups are my favourite type of game. The sprites aren't particularly good, but the beefy sound effects enhance the frantic action no end. Levels one and two are quite straightforward, but from then on it gets pretty tough, and later levels really tax your skills, with loads of very nasty aliens to blast into oblivion. With plenty of secret bonuses to uncover, Thunderforce II will keep you coming back to top your highest score for quite some months. If you like a good blast, this is well worth looking at.

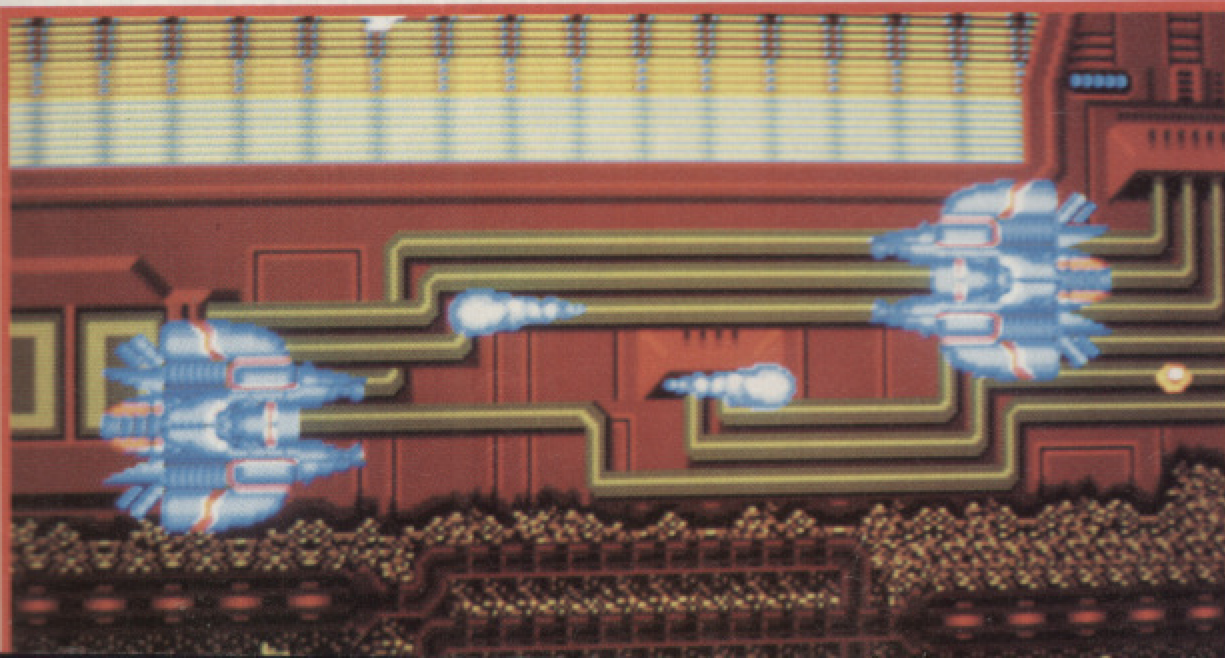




▲ *These flying Brains don't take much damage.*



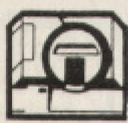
▲ *Using Wave shots on a horizontal level.*



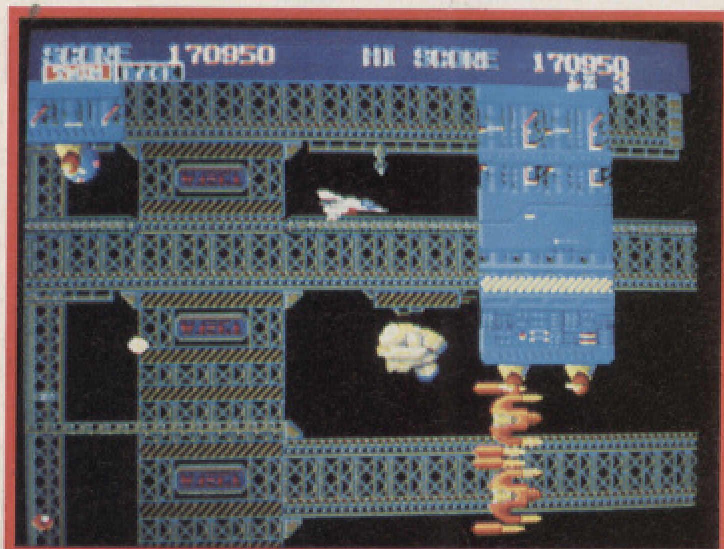
FIREPOWER UNLIMITED

There are plenty of power-ups to collect - some are more powerful than others. Learn which one suits your playing style the best.

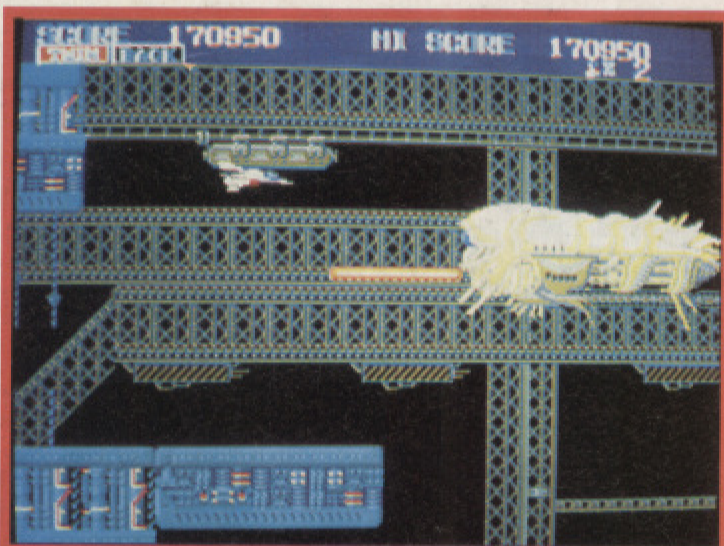
WIDE SHOT: Devastate those on either side of you!
TWIN: Megapower directly ahead - good in tight areas.
CLAW: A drone which circles around your ship and fires extra shots.
FIVE-WAY: Creates swarms of energy waves over a wide area.
FLASH: Forward and rear-firing megablast.
WAVE: Thick band of high firepower - the best for the horizontal levels.
CLASH: Medium power shots, but covers a wide area.
DESTROY: A big swirling energy burst - long pauses between shots, though.
HUNTERS: Reasonably powerful, but home in on the enemy



REVIEW



Drop down quick and blast your way through.



Lawks-a-Lordy! Large laser-lobbing louts litter later levels!



OK, you've got the Destroy weapon, but where's the enemy?

COMMENT



MATT

Thunderforce II is great fun - for a while. But I think you'll get bored with it fairly quickly, as the gameplay is quite limited. Having two different types of scrolling sections is a good idea, but neither format stretches the Megadrive to its limits. This is true for the graphics and sound as well - the sprites aren't particularly good, the backdrops are alright and the sound effects are meaty, but I think the machine is capable of better. Having said that, the action is fast and furious while it lasts - I just wish there was more to it.



Fun on the first level.

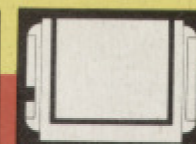


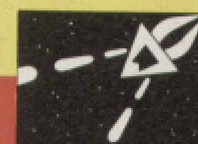
BY: TECHNOSOFT

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 9
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY FAST







PRESENTATION 79%

An options screen with sound test and three skill levels.

GRAPHICS 81%

The sprites are alright, but the backdrops are excellent.

SOUND 85%

Thumping music and plenty of corking sound effects and speech!

PLAYABILITY 84%

Straightforward blasting from the off.

LASTABILITY 80%

Nine tough levels to get through - and plenty of hidden bonuses.

OVERALL 82%

A fast and furious shoot 'em up which should appeal to blasting fanatics.

MEAN MACHINES HOTLINES

WIN A GAMEBOY

0839 121174

Win yourself the hottest hand-held around! It's just lying around waiting for a caring owner just like yourself to ring this number, enter the competition and win it! So don't hang about - ring today, follow the instructions and you could win this brilliant mini-machine!

WIN A MEGADRIVE

0839 121180

The last word in arcade-quality graphics and sound could be yours! Easily the best thing since cling film, all you need to do is pick up the 'phone and let your fingers do the walking! You'd have to be a complete squid not to dial up this number!

WIN A TURBOGRAFX

0839 121187

The Japanese can't get enough of these amazing consoles, but you could win one with just a single, inscrutable call! Yes, the heroes at MEAN MACHINES are giving away a Turbografx, so call the number above to stand a chance of winning this slinky little number!

WIN £150 WORTH OF CONSOLE SOFTWARE

0839 121189

Are we mad or what? We'll give you £150 worth of software for your console should you win this simple compo. Can you afford not to try? Pick up the dog and bone now and just follow the instructions!

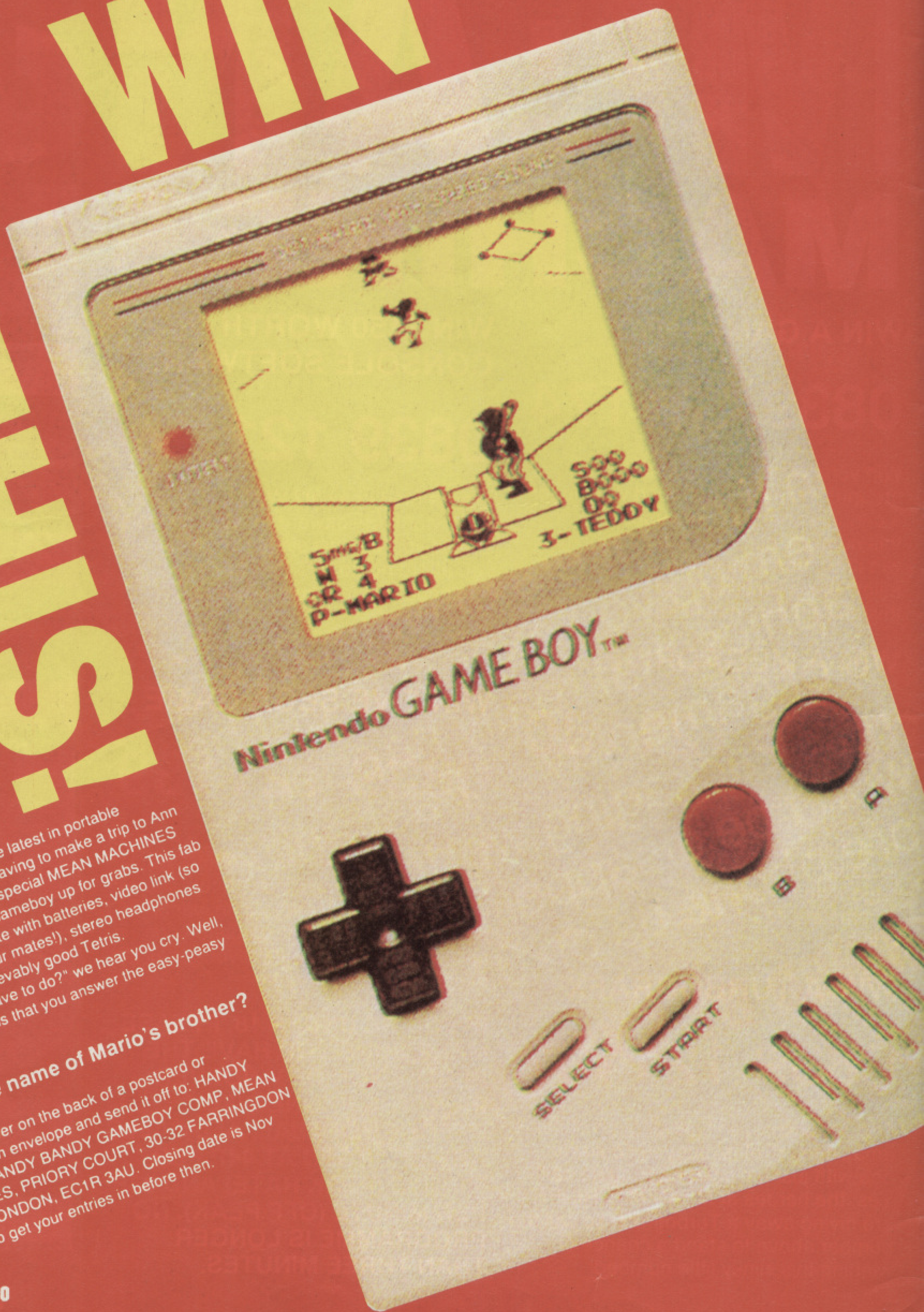
WIN FIVE SEGA GAME

0839 121189

If you've got a Master System, we've got the perfect competition for you! The winner of the competition on this line will get any five games he or she wants - a perfect opportunity to complete your collection! Do yourself a favour - call the number this very minute!

IF YOU'RE UNDER 18, PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE PERMISSION OF WHOEVER PAYS THE PHONE BILL BEFORE YOU DIAL. ALL CALLS ARE CHARGED AT 44P PER MINUTE (PEAK RATE) AND 33P PER MINUTE (OFF PEAK). NO PROGRAMME IS LONGER THAN THREE MINUTES.

WIN THIS!

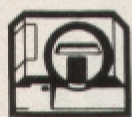


Fancy winning yourself the latest in portable entertainment - without having to make a trip to Ann Summers? Well, in this special MEAN MACHINES competition there's a Gameboy up for grabs. This fab device comes complete with batteries, video link (so you can play with your mates!), stereo headphones and even the unbelievably good Tetris.

"So what do I have to do?" we hear you cry. Well, all that's required is that you answer the easy-peasy question below:

What's the name of Mario's brother?

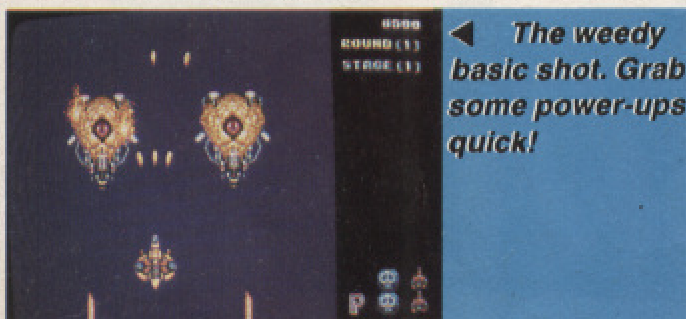
Put the answer on the back of a postcard or sealed-down envelope and send it off to: HANDY DANDY RANDY BANDY GAMEBOY COMP, MEAN MACHINES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Closing date is Nov 26th - so get your entries in before then.



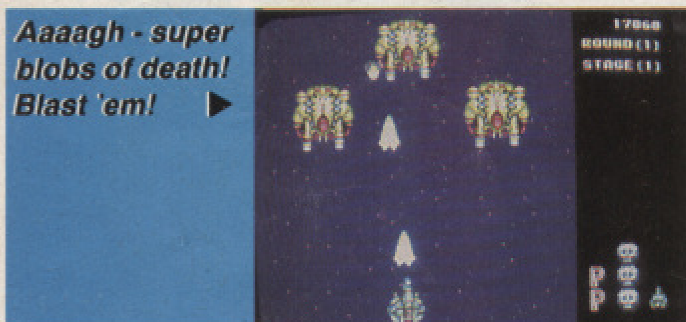
REVIEW

TRUXTON

There are three power-up weapons: lightning rays, green lasers and extra red firepower. Lightning rays are good for mass destruction, but aren't so effective on end-of-level baddies. Green rays are powerful, but are shot in a thin, straight line, which means you have to move around a lot if you're going to destroy everything. The best weapon is extra red firepower, giving both high destructive power and a wider firing range - you also get a shield with this weapon!



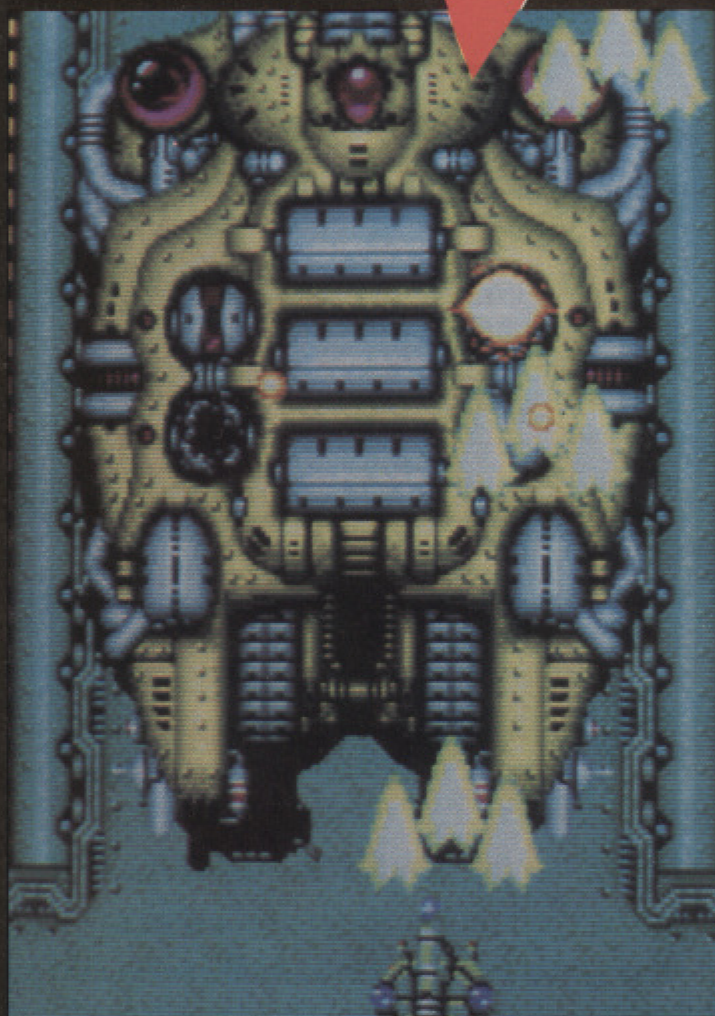
◀ *The weedy basic shot. Grab some power-ups quick!*



Aaaagh - super blobs of death! Blast 'em! ▶



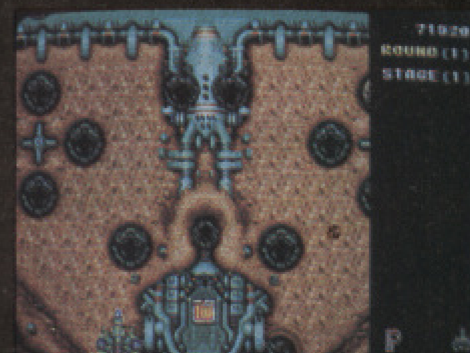
◀ *The lightning follows your foes around.*



▲ *The Big Tank - first end of level jumbo!*



▲ *The drones have set movement patterns - learn them and you'll be able to avoid them easily.*



▲ *Extra life ahoy!*

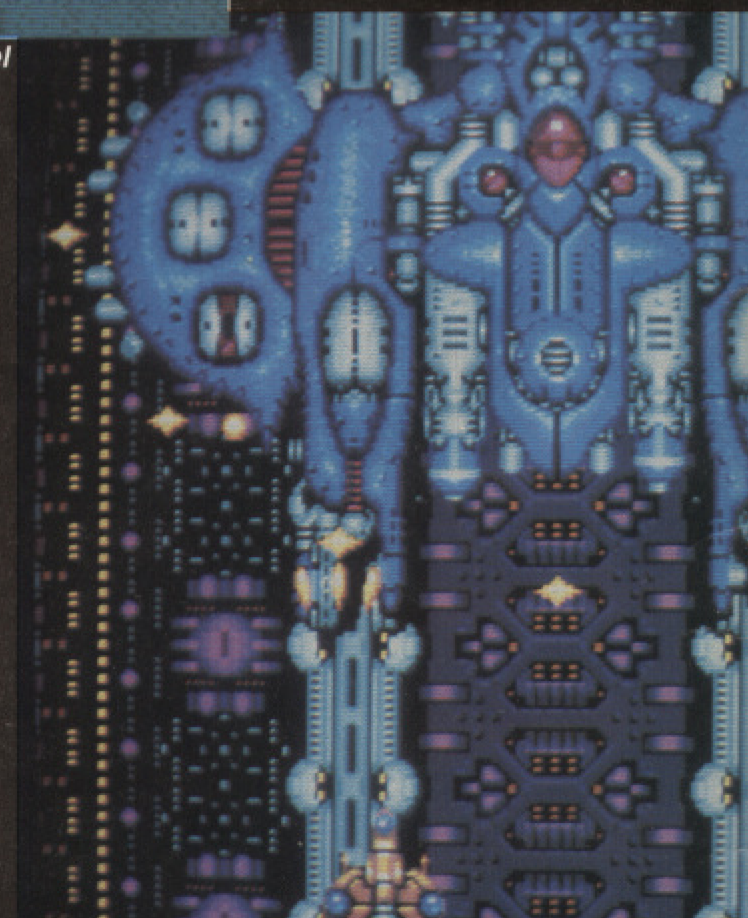
COMMENT



MATT

Truxton grabbed my interest from the beginning despite its unoriginality. The graphics may not be the flashiest seen on the Megadrive, but they are large and colourful and serve their purpose well. The power-ups are excellent, my favourite being the lightning bolt - this allows you to unleash electric death on the nasties from any angle, your beam following them around the screen! All in all, a great game that should be welcome in any shoot 'em up fan's collection.





▲ *Second boss, and guess who's got no smart bombs?*

TON

REVIEW

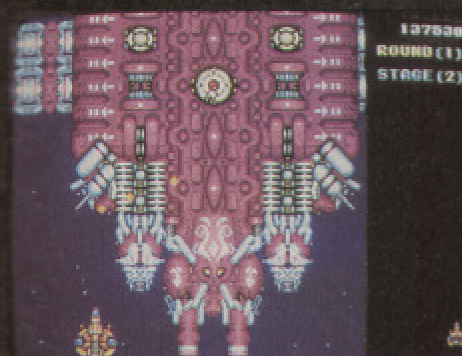


Aliens are steering five asteroids towards Earth, guarding them with a host of nasties armed to the teeth! Guess who's the only one stupid - sorry - brave enough to try and stop them?

This shoot 'em up casts you as a space fighter pilot inflicting as much damage as possible on the swarms of flying aliens and ground installations that are, naturally, trying to shoot you down.

There are a host of power-ups to be collected, as well as extra weapons, extra lives and more smart bombs. The smart bombs themselves are represented as skulls, and unleashing them causes a huge skull-shape to flash across the screen, killing everything.

The end-of-level baddies come in a variety of shapes and sizes and usually in numbers of two to four. It takes a lot of firepower to eliminate them and even when you do, it's no rest for the wicked - the alien scum still keep coming!



▲ *The baddies get bigger and bigger - keep grabbing the power-ups!*

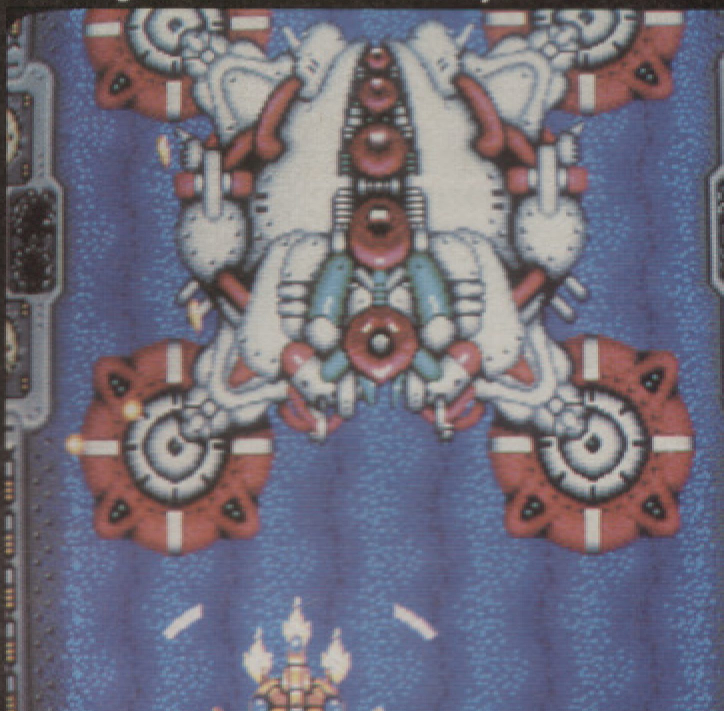


▲ *These light bulbs may look silly, but don't think they're pushovers!*

161650
ROUND(1)
STAGE(2)

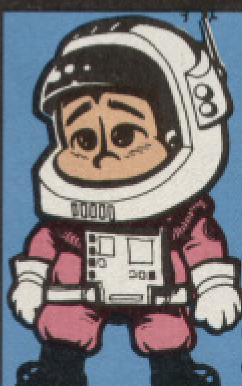
HOW TO POWER-UP

Weapons are upgraded by collecting the flashing tokens left behind by dead aliens. Power-ups need to be collected in quantity to push you onto the next level of destruction, while the smart bombs are on a one-to-one basis. Changing weapons is achieved by snatching up the relevant coloured pod left behind when a ground installation is destroyed.



▲ *A partial shield is little comfort, but better than nothing.*

COMMENT



JULIAN

Truxton is a fine example of a pure, no-frills arcade blast. Just fly up the screen in your Supa Deathmobile and dish out laser doom to the oncoming baddies. At first the going is quite easy, but once the aliens start firing back and begin to attack in large numbers, the game becomes very challenging indeed - just wait until you tackle the exploding light bulbs (well, that's what they look like) on level three! The graphics are pretty straightforward, and the sound is alright, but when it comes down to gameplay, Truxton has plenty of blasting thrills and spills on offer.

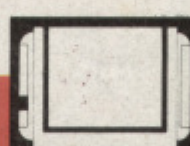


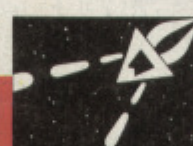
BY: SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY FAST







PRESENTATION 71%
Three skill levels, but little else.

GRAPHICS 82%
Bright, with well defined sprites

SOUND 74%
A decent, if rather tinny tune and basic effects.

PLAYABILITY 85%
Easy enough to begin with, getting rapidly harder. Highly addictive stuff!

LASTABILITY 76%
Experienced blasters should be able to complete the game - if not, you'll certainly have fun trying.

OVERALL 82%
A highly enjoyable blasting romp. Recommended to shoot 'em up fans.

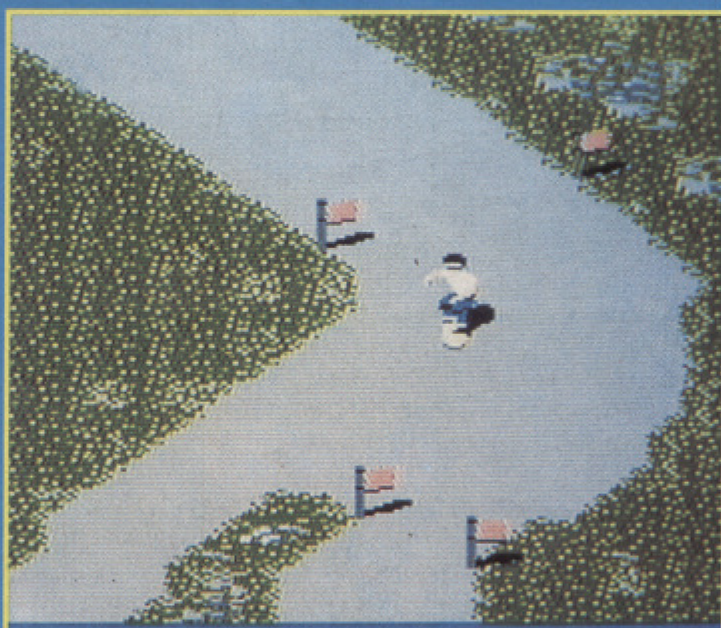
SKATE OR DIE

Skateboarding has been big for ages now, with clubs, magazines, and whole shops devoted to the sport. Now, if it's raining or you've broken your trucks, you don't even have to leave your bedroom to go 'boarding - so long as you've got a Nintendo and a copy of Skate or Die.

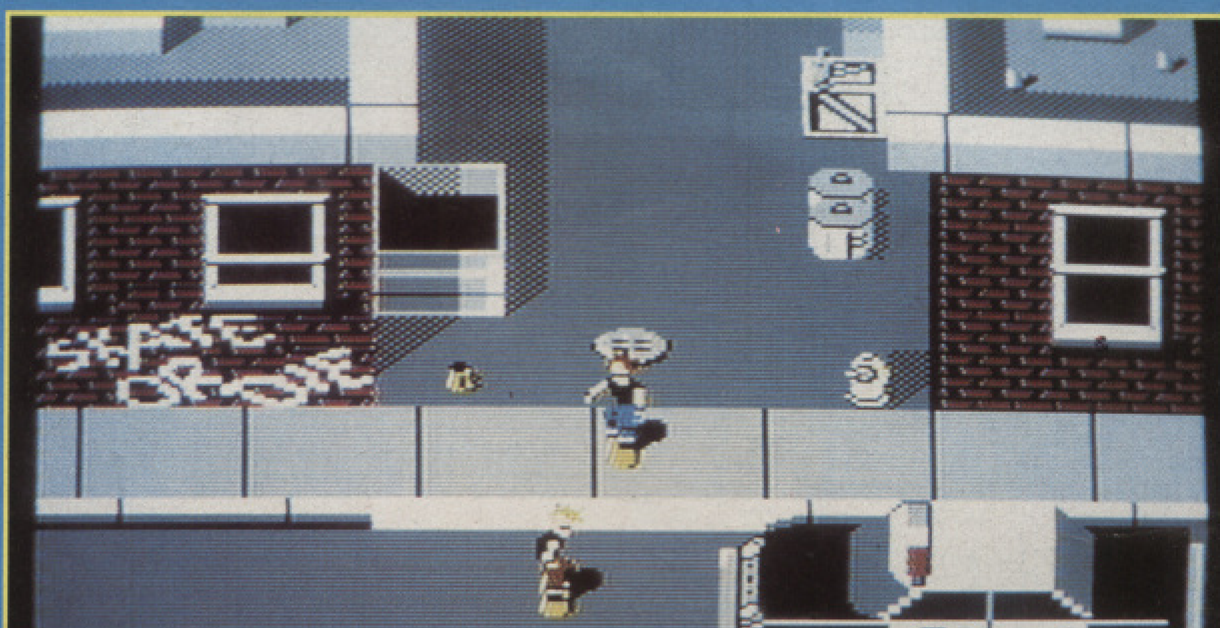
The game casts you as a rad dude in a post-holocaust future. The aim is prove your abilities to Rodney Recloose, the owner of the Flesh 'n' Asphalt Skateboard Shoppe who, along with his mates, rules the roost around town.

The game is divided into five different sections: the downhill race, freestyle on a half-pipe, downhill jam where you fight an opponent, half-pipe high jump and pool joust where you battle other players.

Control of the board is by "regular foot" or "goofy foot", which gives either rotational or directional controls - you just pick the one which best suits your playing style. There's also choice between competition mode or practice mode, to allow you to practice before you enter the real challenges.



▲ *Hangin' ten on the Downhill.*



▲ *Coming second in the Jam - you must do better!*



AT THE SHOPS

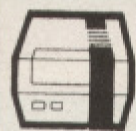
The skateboard shop acts as an intro screen and it is here that you can "sign in". This allows up to eight players to compete, although of course not all at once. If there is only one player, you automatically play against one of Recloose's buddies - Pete, Lester, or Eddie.

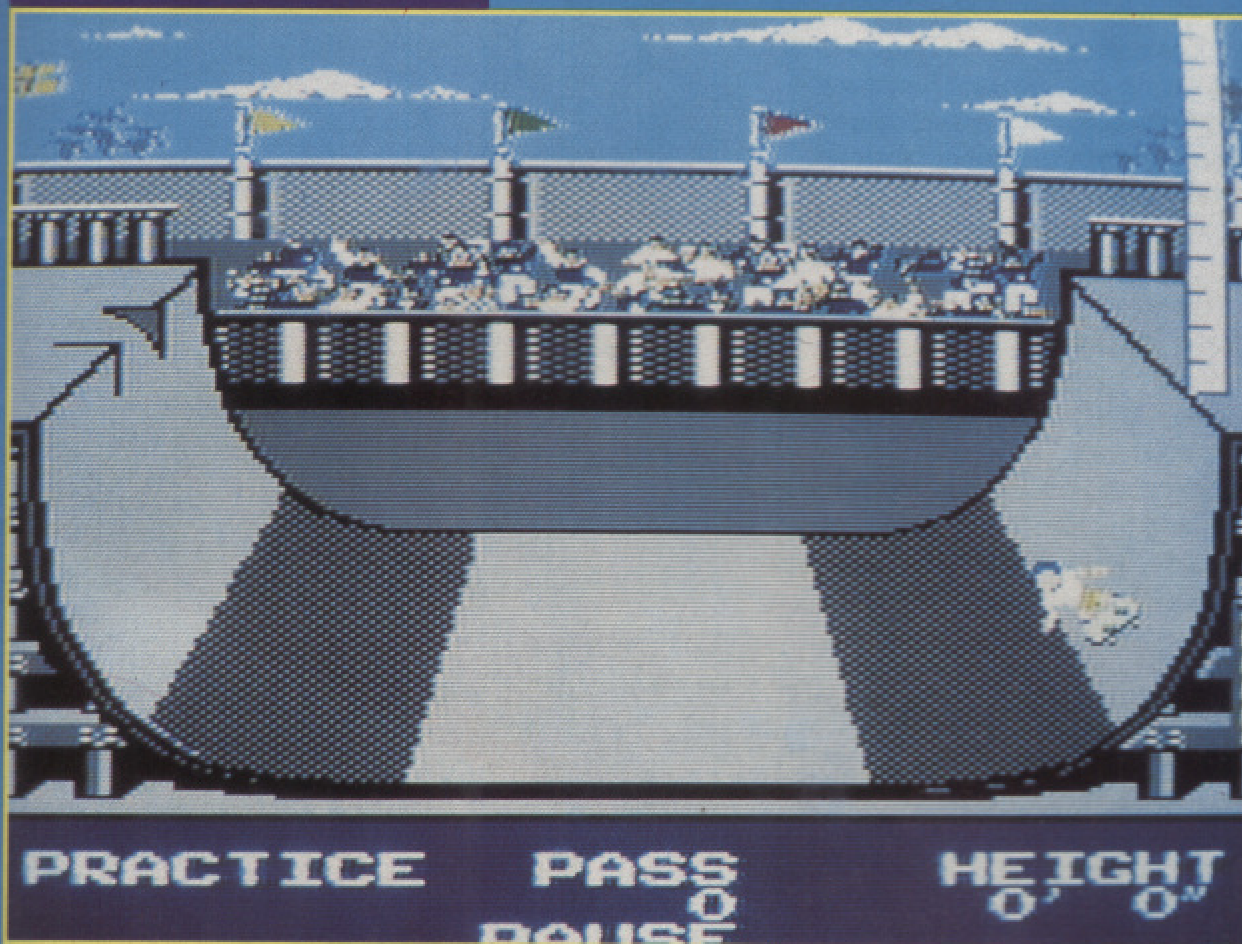
COMMENT



MATT

This is one of the most complicated games on the Nintendo to get to grips with initially, as the responsiveness is rather poor. However this game has a great deal to offer in the long run, with its wide range of options and the multiplayer possibilities. This is fine if you're into games which require loads and loads of practice before you get anywhere, but if you like your action a little more immediate, you'll find yourself getting very frustrated with this.





▲ The height meter on the right gauges your success in the Freestyle.

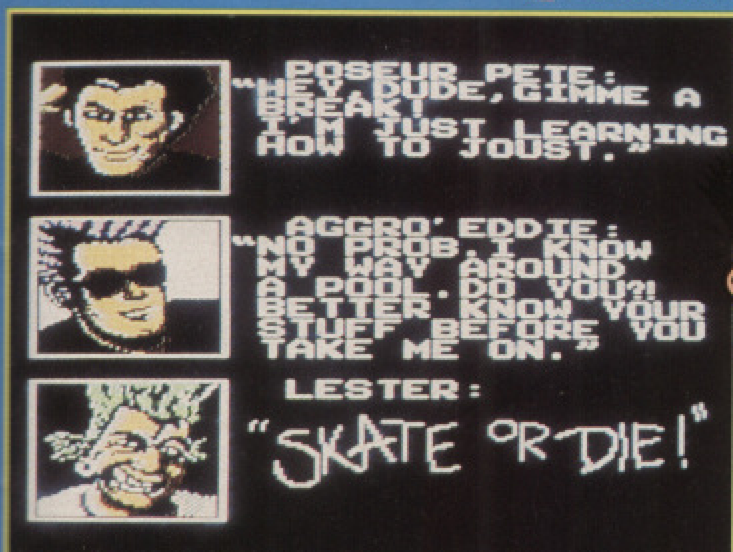
PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Practice mode gives you the chance to get used to each game, with infinite tries if you wish. This is important because in compete mode failure can be permanent! Still, one day you might get your picture on one of the posters in the shop....

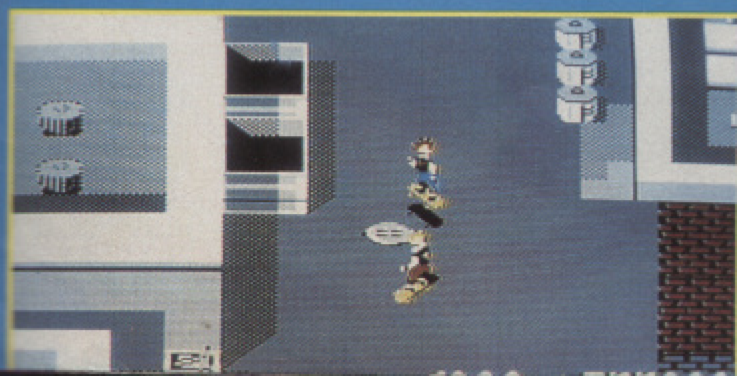


▲ Defeat comes easily in the Pool Joust!

▼ Recloose's very beautiful brood!



▲ Crates, fences, and even punches to be dodged in this event!



COMMENT



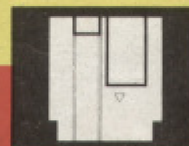
JULIAN

Once you've got over the hurdle of the tricky control method, Skate or Die has plenty of skateboarding laffs 'n' frolics on offer. The sprites are great, with plenty of neat touches - just watch your man get chopped into little pieces when he skates into a chain-link fence, for example. The events are pretty varied and all apart from the high jump (which requires simple button-bashing to succeed) are fun to play. Check it out if you're into skateboarding.

PALCOM™ SOFTWARE
SKATE OR DIE!
PUSH START KEY!

BY: ULTRA
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: NOV
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH
LIVES: N/A
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: SLOW

1-2 PLAYERS





PRESENTATION 83%
Nice picture on loading and the option screen is great

GRAPHICS 75%
The skaters themselves are excellent but are let down by blocky backgrounds.

SOUND 77%
Trendy tunes add a lot to the game, but there should be more sound effects!

PLAYABILITY 80%
Once you've mastered the bizarre control system it becomes second nature.

LASTABILITY 81%
The game's strongest point. Loads of options and the chance to compete with your friends give this a long life.

OVERALL 78%
A tricky game to master - but has great potential if you persevere.

PREVIEW

MEGADRIVE

Super Monaco GP is a conversion of Sega's own rip-roaring road racing coin-op, and just like the arcade game it gives you the chance to race a field of maniac drivers around the famous Monaco street circuit. But unlike the arcade game, there's also a complete World Grand Prix option - but more of that later.

At the start of a game you get the choice of three formula cars: B Class (automatic gearbox), A Class (four-speed manual), and Super A Class (seven-speed manual) - the cars increase in power and performance respectively

Before you enter the actual race, you first have to run a qualifying lap, and the better your time, the better your grid position. Then it's onto the race itself - and time for some really fast driving!

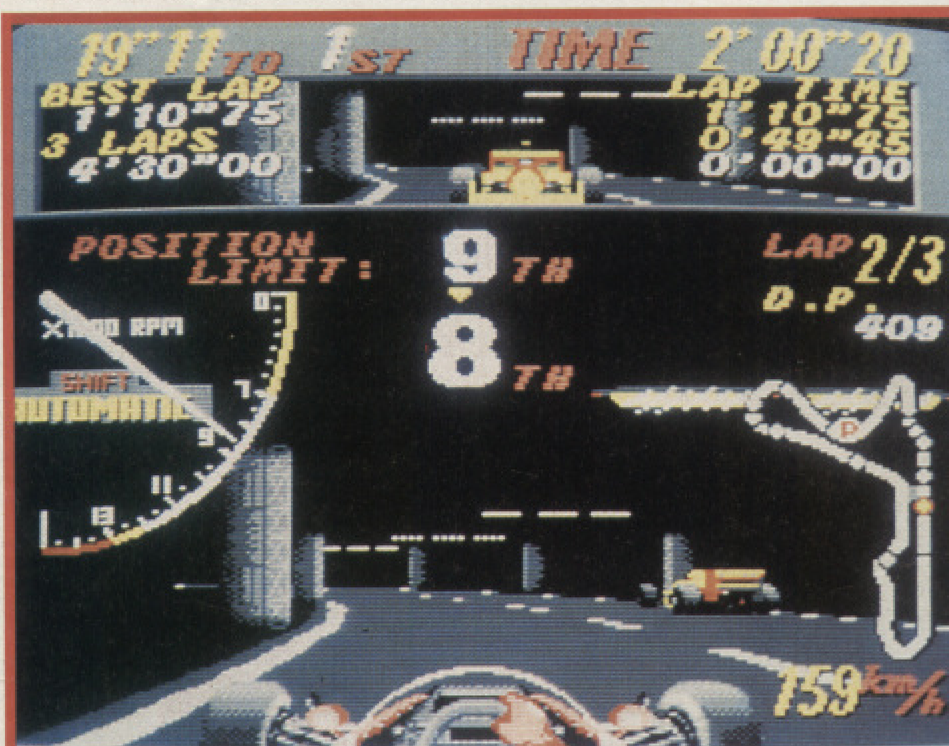


SUPER

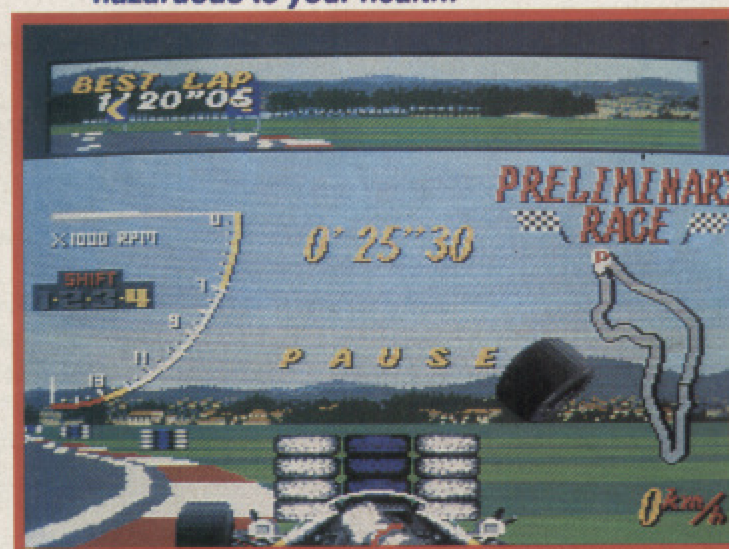
▶ No, you can't choose a German as a rival - after all, we're all friends now!

◀ He's right behind you, but the tunnel will make it difficult for him to overtake you.

▼ Revs to maximum as you zoom off the starting grid.



▼ Driving into barriers at 300 kph can be hazardous to your health!







WORLD CIRCUIT

Not only is Super Monaco GP a brilliant coin-op conversion, the programmers have also included a complete World Circuit option which features all the famous race courses you could think of. At the start of a racing season you're given a low-powered car, and simply have to race against a whole field of other drivers and win to gain as many points as possible. If you do well, a top team might invite you to join them, and you'll get an even better car to drive!





▲ *In the pits. How can you win the race when all your mechanics speak Japanese?*

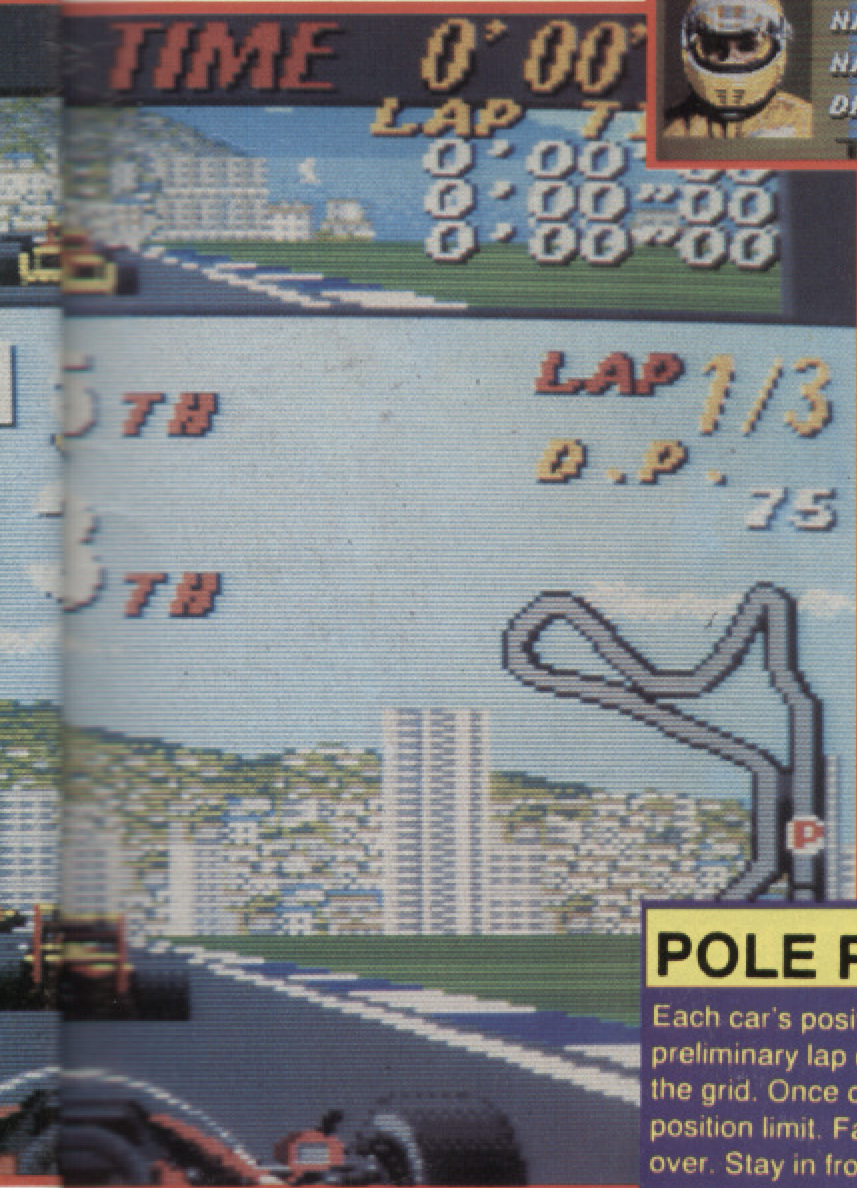
MONACO GP

ZEROFORCE
RIVAL: RACE WITH HIM? ▸YES NO
MACHINE
NAME: ZEROFORCE 231
ENGINE: LORRY 89 V8
MAX POWER: 560,630,730 PS/RPM
DRIVER
NAME: P.KLINGER
NATIONALITY: WEST GERMANY
DRIVER'S POINT: 0

MINARAE
MACHINE
NAME: MINARAE 594
ENGINE: SEGA SG1000 V8
MAX POWER: 640,6
DRIVER
NAME: YOU
NATIONALITY: YOUR COUNTRY
DRIVER'S POINT: 0
ENG. T.M. SUS. ARE BRA.



▲ *We still haven't got a clue what they're on about. Teatime, perhaps?*



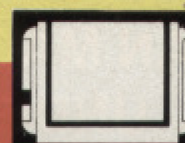




POLE POSITION

Each car's position on the track is very important. The preliminary lap determines your starting location on the grid. Once off, a number on-screen shows the position limit. Fall behind this limit and the race is over. Stay in front and you can keep on racing.







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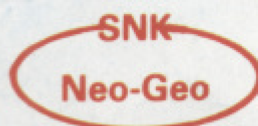


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